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A HOME WEEKLY FOR WINTER NIGHTS AND SUMMER DAYS.

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No. 301.

HAPPY HARRY, The Wild Boy of the Woods; OR, THE PIRATES OF THE NORTHERN LAKES.

BY OLL COOMES.

Author of "Idaho Tom," "Dakota Dan," "Bowie-knife Ben," "Old Hurricane," "Hawkeye Harry," "Death Notch," "One-armed Alf," "Red Rob," etc.

CHAPTER I. HAPPY HARRY.

IN the depths of the trackless forest bordering upon Lake St. Clair, over half a century ago, a score of birds held a concert or merry-making, one July afternoon. At least so it would have seemed to a casual observer, for never sung birds merrier than those assembled in that great, green oak. Birds of brilliant plumage, birds of somber wings, birds of sweetest song, and birds that could only twitter, were assembled there—hopping, fluttering, and frolicking among the branches as though the happiest creatures on earth. And at the same time, each one kept its eyes turned downward as if watching something or some person. And so it was. They were watching a human being—a boy who was seated upon a fallen tree-trunk regarding them with a glow of admiration in his blue eyes.

A gun lay across his lap, and a large dog crouched at his feet. He was amusing himself with the feathered assembly above. When one sung, he whistled in exact imitation. He mimicked them all. He sung, twittered, and chirped as they did. He had called each one there by its own peculiar song, and it had come as if to greet a long-lost mate.

Birds have almost a human sociability, and love the society of man more than any of the animal kind. There seems to be a mutual and sympathetic attraction existing between mankind and the birds of the air. And of this, the boy on the log was fully aware. He courted the society of his winged associates. He had been reared with them, as it were. Oft times, when alone, he called them around him, through medium of his wonderful powers of imitation, and sung and whistled with them as though they were a band of rollicking boys.

This youthful personage could not have been over sixteen years of age. His form was lithe and slender, yet it was easily seen that he was as strong, wiry, and supple as a young panther. There was a fresh, healthful glow on his smooth brown face, and a twinkle of boyish mischief, combined with a spirit of adventure, in his soft blue eyes. And although he would scarcely draw a hundred pounds of avoirdupois, there was nothing effeminate about his physique or features; and stripped of that halo which radiated from the boy, he would not have been considered handsome. It was the expression of the face and the light of the eye that one would have admired. There was nothing deep or hidden in his looks. His was one of those good, honest, spirited souls that lay revealed upon the surface. Love of adventure was one of the most predominant traits of his character, combined with the many elements that go to make up one of those odd, humorous, and jovial fellows often met with on the border and in the wilderness. A dimple lurked at each corner of his mouth that seemed ready, at the least provocation, to give way to a hearty laugh. Mischief dropped out on every feature, and the whole was slightly tinged with an expression bordering on the comical, to which a prominent Roman nose gave additional strength.

The youth was dressed in buckskin pants and overshirt, which were ornamented around the knees, up the seams, and around the shoulders with a fringe of the same material. His feet were incased in leather moccasins, and his head covered with a three-cornered hat, which he wore cocked back jauntily upon his head.

He was armed with a rifle, a brace of pistols, and a hunting-knife. A powder-horn and bullet-pouch hung at his side by means of a strap passing over his shoulder and across his breast. Upon the breech of his rifle was cut in rude characters the name—

"HAPPY HARRY."

The dog crouched at the youth's feet was a huge mastiff of the St. Bernard breed, considerably larger in every respect than his master, and possessed of prodigious strength.

For fully an hour the youth sat amusing himself with the birds that sported around him; but, growing tired of this, he arose and sauntered away leisurely through the woods, his dog following at his heels. As he advanced the forest seemed to deepen around him, and the gloom to thicken.

"Great hornets, Belshazzar!" the lad suddenly exclaimed, addressing his dumb companion, "this here woods are gittin' to be a reglar black wilderness; it is, for a sublime



It was a small brown hand with tapering fingers and a wrist encircled by a hoop of gold.

fact. Sin wouldn't breed here worth a cent, so we needn't look fur sinners. Don't s'pose there's a red-skin within ten miles of us. But, keep up spirits, 'Shazzar; we'll soon reach St. Clair's boom'n' shores, where the huge Leviathan gambols and the green-headed frog warbles his dulcet lay to the lugubrious mud-turtle. We've had a tramp to-day all for nothin', but then, as we're eternally and always on the go, wharfore's the difference? But come, Belshazzar; let's amble along, my hearty, and mebbey we'll find somethin' yet to take the melancholy out of your downcast spirits."

So saying, Happy Harry turned and resumed his journey through the woods, whistling a sprightly air—apparently totally oblivious to the terrible fact that death and danger stalked abroad in all the dark woods bordering on the Northern lakes—that the red-man prowled upon every hand in search of enemies, with a murderous intent in his heart—a murderous look upon his dusky brow. He glided swiftly through the undergrowth and along the tangled mazes of the dense, dark thicket with the ease and familiarity of one whose life had been spent in threading the byways of the wilderness. At the same time, however, he manifested none of that habitual precaution of the born frontiersman in his movements. Indifference to unknown dangers was one of the youth's modes of guarding against that danger. His careless movements were not, however, unaccompanied; nothing within range escaped his keen, hawk-like eyes. He searched every bush and thicket as

he advanced, and allowed nothing to give him undue excitement. He was thoroughly learned in the lore of the woods. He knew every voice of the wilderness, and could interpret the meaning of every sound, even to the rustle of a bush. He was a natural student of nature; nothing escaped his eyes and ears; and from the most insignificant thing he could always pick a grain of knowledge.

As the lad moved on his attention was suddenly attracted by a low growl of his canine friend. He ceased whistling, but never slackened his pace in the least. For all he knew, the dog had warned him of danger; it was a part of his tactics to avert it by a seeming disregard of things around him. But, as he continued to advance, Belshazzar manifested his master's side in no little excitement.

"What is it, Bell? what do you see?—hear? smell?" he said, stopping and turning to his dog.

The dog uttered a low bark, and plunging on ahead, disappeared from sight. In a few moments, however, he came bounding back to his master's side in no little excitement.

"Hoppin' hornets! what's up, Belshazzar? And munificent Moses! thar's blood on your snout, thar is, for an awful fact."

To be certain, however, the boy examined the dog's nose more closely, and, true enough, found a slight stain of blood upon it. As there was no scratch or abrasion from which the blood could have oozed, the lad was satisfied it had been put there during the momentary absence of the animal. What did it im-

ply? Surely something was wrong, and the youth set out to investigate the matter. He sent the dog on ahead. The animal led him into a dark, dismal thicket, then stopped and began sniffing and whining in a suspicious manner around some old dead leaves that had been recently raked into a long heap and weighted down with some green boughs cut from a neighboring bush.

Happy Harry uttered a low whistle of surprise as he scrutinized the pile of dry leaves, that resembled a newly-made grave in its proportions. Then he glanced carefully around him, through the thicket, into the tree-tops, as though he felt sure some one was watching him. But not a sign of life was visible anywhere.

The dog continued his sniffing around the mound of leaves, now and then jumping back as if with fright, and uttering a low, whining bark.

"Hoppin' hornets, 'Shazzar! what do you mean? What you treed thar, pup? a serpent? a sick bear? or a red-skin? Which are it? Speak right out."

"Bow-wow!" barked the dog, scratching at the heap.

"Great hoppin' hornets!" burst from his lips, as a human groan burst suddenly upon his ears. Then he gazed around him as if to see from whence came the sound. But all was silence and shadows. The presence of death could not have thrown more gloom around the youth than that strange cry. His eyes finally became fixed upon the heap of leaves before him. He spoke to his dog.

The sagacious animal seemed to comprehend his very thoughts, and bounding forward, he thrust his muzzle into the brown heap. In an instant he withdrew it, and from the depths of the frail covering he drew forth a human hand! It was a small brown hand with tapering fingers and a wrist encircled by a hoop of gold—a woman's hand, beyond a doubt—a hand that was still warm and aquiver with life!

CHAPTER II.

WHAT HARRY FOUND UNDER THE LEAVES.

HAPPY HARRY was completely dumbfounded, and it was fully a minute before he could get his thoughts to work. And then, but for the presence of blood on the little dusky hand, lying so limp and yet so graceful on the pile of leaves before him, he would have believed that there was some movement on foot to entrap him. But a low moan of agony, which could not have been otherwise than the true expression of pain, dispelled all feelings from his breast save deepest sympathy and kindness, and advancing to the leafy mound, he bent over it and began carefully raking the leaves away. He soon came to the form to which the hand belonged. It was that of an Indian girl. She was wrapped in a blanket, and, to all outward appearances, was dead.

"Here, Bell," the lad said to his dog, "take hold and carry this gal out of these graveyard shadders."

He gathered the four corners of the blanket together and placed them in the mouth of his dog. The powerful mastiff lifted the form of the maiden as easily as though she were a child. He carried her out of the thicket and some distance through the woods, when a grassy plot was pointed out to him by his master whereon to deposit his burden, which he did with almost human tenderness.

Harry saw that the maiden was still bleeding profusely from an ugly wound upon the head. She was totally insensible, but her wild, incoherent mutterings gave evidence of returning consciousness.

"Hoppin' hornets!" exclaimed the boy, in apparent perplexity, "here I am in a confounded predicament. I've got an elephant on my hands, I have for a mortal fact. And what the horned gallinippers am I goin' to do with the critter? And, what's more, how came she here in this banged-up condition? She's an Ottawa, and 's got a 'tarnal ugly jolt on the corollum; but switched if she arn't the prettiest little Injun squaw I ever seen. She's a royal diadem of a beauty. She's just exquisite, and I'm goin' to do the fair thing by her, I am for a generous fact."

The maiden could not have been over sixteen years of age, and for an Indian was decidedly pretty, her face wearing a childlike simplicity. Her neck and arms were loaded with costly jewelry, and a wreath of flowers girded her brow. But these, as was also her black hair, were covered with blood that oozed from the deep gash on her head.

Harry examined the nature and extent of her injuries, which he decided must have been inflicted by the blow of a club or some heavy, blunt weapon. But who could be so heartless and cowardly as to strike a helpless girl down, he could not conceive, unless it was some resentful wretch of her own tribe whose love she had doubtless spurned, and who had resolved she should not favor another.

The young borderman took the blanket from about her form, and running back to a little stream he had recently crossed, dipped it into the water and returned to the maiden. He wrung some of the cool liquid from the blanket upon her head and temples. He bathed her brow and washed the blood from her face and hands with all care and tenderness. Then he stanchd the flow of blood with some lint from the blanket, and bound up the wound with a strip of her calico frock.

Under these kind ministrations she appeared to recover rapidly. She finally opened her eyes, gazed around her, uttered a startled cry, and again appeared to sink into unconsciousness. Harry saw, however, that she had fully recovered her senses and was only affecting insensibility, doubtless through fear of him.

"See here now," he needn't play that on me, Becky—I mean Lily-of-the-valley. I've done the fair thing by you—me and the pup has—and now, if you could appreciate it, and condescend to open them black eyes and ad-

dress us kindly, we'd be superbly tickled. Oh, git out now! you needn't try to look through yer half-open peepers. We're not fools, and by the horned gallinippers, we'll up and leave you here if you don't recognize us as friends. Confound it! you're jist like all the girls. You'd die rather than do what I want ye to. That's feminine perversity out and out; it is, for a scandalous fact."

The maiden did not understand a word he said, or else was determined not to stir from her simulated insensible state; and after waiting a sufficient time for her to make up her mind in regard to the matter, he turned, called his dog and started away. "It was not his intention to desert her entirely, for, as soon as he was out of sight, he slipped back and took a position behind a tree where he could watch her."

No sooner was the sly, terrified young girl assured that she was alone, than her eyes opened and glanced quickly around. Then she arose to a sitting posture and felt of her head and the bandage upon it; then she attempted to rise to her feet, but failed.

"You're purty weak yit, Lily-of-the-valley," suddenly broke upon her ears, and Happy Harry stepped from his covert, with a mischievous smile upon his face. "You better rest quiet an hour or so and you'll git stronger. That's a monstrous big leak on your head, and the best part of the gal's leaked away."

The maiden's eyes sought the ground, and a look of petulance overspread her face. She made no reply to Harry's remarks.

"Girl, have you got a tongue?" the lad asked, a little curiously. "It'd be a sublime satisfaction for me to know, it would, for an honest fact." He repeated the question in the Ottawa dialect.

The maiden looked up. She touched her head, and in a feeble tone, said:

"The young pale-face has saved Eeelaah's life."

"I'm slightly conscious of havin' done a little for you by way of keepin' you from the land of your forefathers; but how did you git hurt, Eeelaah?"

She shook her head, which act Harry accepted as a refusal to answer him.

"Wal, it's all right," he moralized; "them as has their sekrets can stick to 'em. It makes no odds to me. It's a monstrous queer world this is, for an embellished fact."

A low growl from his dog started him, and turning, he saw a man approaching at a leisurely pace. He was an entire stranger to the boy; moreover, he was dressed and painted as an Indian; but Harry was too well versed in the movements of an Indian not to see that the new-comer was a white man in disguise. He was a young man, with a rather handsome face, a rakish air, and a dark-gray eye, that was not altogether pleasing to the critical mind of the young border-boy. But, concealing his dislike, he exclaimed, in a frank, open tone:

"Hullo, here! Howdy, stranger?"

"No reason to complain, sir," responded the stranger, glancing at the youth, then at his dog; "but how's this—that ornery-lookin' big cur bite?"

"Softly, gently, respectfully, stranger, speak of that dog," replied Harry, waving the man back. That pup is sagacious—he's sensitive, and all creation couldn't stop him if he took a notion to masticate you. Hoppin' horns! that little critter has fainted away agin'; she has, for a bitter fact."

It was the girl of which he now spoke. She had fallen prostrate in a swoon, and now lay like one dead.

"Hullo! what you got there? A sick Injin, ar'n't it?" asked the stranger, as his eye fell upon the maiden's form.

"Sick! why, sick's no name for it. Some cowardly devil has 'nigh about busted her head open, stranger. That's an awful gash on it, and I'm afraid the poor young thing will not see her way through. I found her out here in a thicket, covered with old leaves. But I'm going to do my best for her, for she's the purest Injin I ever set my eyes on. But, looky here, stranger, why are you, brigged out like a bloody Ottawa?"

"I find it convenient to one's scalp in this outlandish country," responded the man.

"Well, who be you?"

"Abel Doyle, and you?"

"I'm a royal young sap-sucker—a descendant of the children of Adam, and am called Happy Harry."

"Ay! the Wild Boy of the Woods?"

"Yes, or any other name."

"Don't you know there's a price on your head?"

"In course I do, for a clear fact."

"And do you know what for?" Doyle continued.

"To be sure I do," responded Harry, seating himself on the ground.

"Well, set down and I'll tell you all 'bout it, Abel. You see, I used to live and fly a kite up in northern Injinny, at a place called Gomorrah. That was a log school-house that, with long log benches that'd carry a dozen thin-skinned boys. I war goin' to school there when the thing happened. I war a real likely scholar, Abel, and could jist rattle off 'incomprehensibleness' without takin' breath or battin' my eyes once clear through. I'd 'bin a spankin' good scholar, I'd kept on, and by this time I might 'a' bin a preacher or a dancin'-master. But that little affair played the deuce. You see, Peggy Long war as sweet on me as a bee on clover, and I jist despised the dinged old thing. She was only ten years older'n me, and uglier than a bullfrog on a mud fence. She war always stickin' her ole nose in atwixt me and Sally Beems, and that made me hornit mad. And one day she up and slipped her gum, that she'd been wallerin' between her jaws for six months, into my hand, and said, with an expirin' smile, that I might use it till recess. 'Whiz! it made me mad as a hoppin' hornit; and so, when ole Peg went to recite her lesson, I basted her gum on the bench war she sot, and when she come back, down she dabbed herself on it, and she had on her fix-up dress, too. But, things run along awhile, and nearly all the boys on my bench got to laffin' and titterin' 'bout Peg's gum, then ole Bilkins, the teacher, seed us, and you ort to 'a' heard his long dogwood stick rattle down off the joist. Whew! he swung the pisen thing on high, and, oh, horns! how ten coats; all strung along nicely on the same seat, did flip up, as that ole dogwood warped down upon us. Some of the boys were studyin' away like old philosophers, and wasn't expectin' the gad, but they got it, and I tell ye it listid 'em deliciously."

"When one boy on a bench that way gets to sittin' up, the rest might as well pitch in and have their little fun, too, for they're sure to git their share of the dogwood. I never keered if I war in the middle or next to the teacher; but, Lord, Abel! was it ever your ghastly misfortune to sit on t'other end of the bench and have the loose end of the switch whup right up till it'd hit a blister every warp? If you hav'n't, I have, and I'll be hung if it don't smart till a feller can see little rings floatin' out of his eyes. Aside from the dogwood, Abel, a school-house is a dull place for me. I allers could sleep soundly in one, and even now the sight of one makes me drowsy. Somethin' queer 'bout that, ar'n't it, stranger?"

"I'll admit it is, in your case at least," replied Doyle, somewhat interested in the lad's story; "but you have lost the main thread of your story. You commenced to tell about the reward."

"Well, yes, I war comin' to that," continued Harry. "After ole Bilkins had given us boys a good bastin', and regulated his system, he returned to his class. Elevating his spectacles on his forehead, he bawled out:

"Can any one tell me how the desecrated township of Gomorrah is bounded?"

"On the north by Pole-cat creek, south by Muskeeter swamp, squashed Peg Long, bouncin' to her feet, when rip went her dress. The gum had stuck it, and snatched out a strip the hull length of the skirt. The boys began to giggle, the girls to titter behind their books, Peg to cry, and ole Bilkins to champ his bits. Down rushed the old dogwood switch with a dash-see-saw-saw-saw, and then, in tones of thunder, the culprit was called for. I had a notion to lay it to Dicky Howes, but then I thought of George Washington and his hatchet, and I riz to my feet and told the hull truth like a little man, thinkin' it would induce ole Bilky to ease up on me. But, hoppin' horns! you'd ort to 'a' seen the old tiger pant. He fairly danced, he war so mad. 'I'll larn ye,' he whistled, as he let his glasses fall to the floor, and before he could pick 'em up, one of the boys brushed 'em aside with his foot, another picked 'em up and passed 'em to the next, and in two seconds they were on t'other side of the house on Billy Trotter's face; but, you bet, Billy kept his big geography spread out well before his face, and winked at us boys around the corners. But the loss of his glasses give ole Bilkins a mad fit. 'Veneration,' he yelled like an Ojibway squaw, 'you, Harry Wilde, will provoke me to your destruction. My blood's bilin' hot, and I'll bleed him, stranger, for I thought I could hear it blubberin' in his veins; and so I concluded to make myself rare in that place, and so out I jumped at a winder and away I went. And out bounced ole Bilky, and away he started after me. I tell you, it war fun alive for the other boys to see ole Bilky's game legs go wabblin' across the meadow like wheels out of dish. Even ole Peg Long mopped out her eyes and swung her handkercher and yelled like a sick wild-cat. Wal, I took to the creek whar I knowed that war a deep hole, and jist as I reached the bank I dogged behind a big tree. In a minute the ole pettygog came teakin' up like a whirlwind and sweatin' like a Turk. He thought I'd dogged down into the water, or under the bank, and so he walked up and was leavin' over lookin' for me, when I slipped up behind him and dumped him into the water. It was mean in me, I know, but I done it to cool his blood. It'd 'a' made a wooden man laff to see him spout water. Oh, it war de-lightful, stranger, and I nearly killed myself laffin'. But ole Bilky got out and—so did I. He swore out a s'arch-warrant, or some law thing, to have me arrested for murder, and so I jist come off out here to look around St. Clair awhile. And I understand Bilkins offers five dollars reward for my arrest."

"Just so," responded Doyle, with a tinge of sarcasm which Harry did not fail to detect. He had also noticed that, while he was relating his story—which was told more to throw Doyle off his guard than any other object—Doyle had kept a continual watch upon the motionless form of the Indian girl with manifest uneasiness. Harry also stole a glance now and then at the face of the maiden, and being situated so that he could see her features distinctly, he was not a little surprised to see that she was only feigning unconsciousness, and watching Doyle through her half-open eyes. This led Harry to believe that the two were not strangers to each other, and in order to bring the matter to a point, he said:

"Stranger, I s'pose you know who that gal is, seein' she's an Ottawa and you a Huron?"

"I know nothing of the girl. The village of the Ottawas is far from that of the Hurons."

"S'pose, then, you're hunting down this way?"

"Well, yes," responded the man, with some hesitation.

"That's what we're doin'—that's me and Belshazzar. I tell you, Abel, that dog makes a strong old fight. You'd ort to see him handle the regular of an Ottawa or—"

"Haw! I presume," interrupted Doyle.

"No, stranger; me and the Hurons are friends."

"You were, but are not now."

"And why not?"

"You haven't heard that the United States has declared war against Great Britain, and hostilities have opened, and that the Hurons have taken sides with the latter?"

"Great hoppin' horns! No! I never heard it hinted before. But, munificent Moses! won't it make times brisk? Of course you side with us, don't you, stranger?"

"Do you mean the American Republic?"

"Well, yes, seem' we're a fraction of the republic—American citizens."

"What organization do you represent?"

"Why, stranger, you're a proponent of a dancin'-master. But that little affair played the deuce. You see, Peggy Long war as sweet on me as a bee on clover, and I jist despised the dinged old thing. She was only ten years older'n me, and uglier than a bullfrog on a mud fence. She war always stickin' her ole nose in atwixt me and Sally Beems, and that made me hornit mad. And one day she up and slipped her gum, that she'd been wallerin' between her jaws for six months, into my hand, and said, with an expirin' smile, that I might use it till recess. 'Whiz! it made me mad as a hoppin' hornit; and so, when ole Peg went to recite her lesson, I basted her gum on the bench war she sot, and when she come back, down she dabbed herself on it, and she had on her fix-up dress, too. But, things run along awhile, and nearly all the boys on my bench got to laffin' and titterin' 'bout Peg's gum, then ole Bilkins, the teacher, seed us, and you ort to 'a' heard his long dogwood stick rattle down off the joist. Whew! he swung the pisen thing on high, and, oh, horns! how ten coats; all strung along nicely on the same seat, did flip up, as that ole dogwood warped down upon us. Some of the boys were studyin' away like old philosophers, and wasn't expectin' the gad, but they got it, and I tell ye it listid 'em deliciously."

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"You were, but are not now."

"And why not?"

"You haven't heard that the United States has declared war against Great Britain, and hostilities have opened, and that the Hurons have taken sides with the latter?"

"Great hoppin' horns! No! I never heard it hinted before. But, munificent Moses! won't it make times brisk? Of course you side with us, don't you, stranger?"

"Do you mean the American Republic?"

"Well, yes, seem' we're a fraction of the republic—American citizens."

"What organization do you represent?"

"Why, stranger, you're a proponent of a dancin'-master. But that little affair played the deuce. You see, Peggy Long war as sweet on me as a bee on clover, and I jist despised the dinged old thing. She was only ten years older'n me, and uglier than a bullfrog on a mud fence. She war always stickin' her ole nose in atwixt me and Sally Beems, and that made me hornit mad. And one day she up and slipped her gum, that she'd been wallerin' between her jaws for six months, into my hand, and said, with an expirin' smile, that I might use it till recess. 'Whiz! it made me mad as a hoppin' hornit; and so, when ole Peg went to recite her lesson, I basted her gum on the bench war she sot, and when she come back, down she dabbed herself on it, and she had on her fix-up dress, too. But, things run along awhile, and nearly all the boys on my bench got to laffin' and titterin' 'bout Peg's gum, then ole Bilkins, the teacher, seed us, and you ort to 'a' heard his long dogwood stick rattle down off the joist. Whew! he swung the pisen thing on high, and, oh, horns! how ten coats; all strung along nicely on the same seat, did flip up, as that ole dogwood warped down upon us. Some of the boys were studyin' away like old philosophers, and wasn't expectin' the gad, but they got it, and I tell ye it listid 'em deliciously."

"When one boy on a bench that way gets to sittin' up, the rest might as well pitch in and have their little fun, too, for they're sure to git their share of the dogwood. I never keered if I war in the middle or next to the teacher; but, Lord, Abel! was it ever your ghastly misfortune to sit on t'other end of the bench and have the loose end of the switch whup right up till it'd hit a blister every warp? If you hav'n't, I have, and I'll be hung if it don't smart till a feller can see little rings floatin' out of his eyes. Aside from the dogwood, Abel, a school-house is a dull place for me. I allers could sleep soundly in one, and even now the sight of one makes me drowsy. Somethin' queer 'bout that, ar'n't it, stranger?"

"I'll admit it is, in your case at least," replied Doyle, somewhat interested in the lad's story; "but you have lost the main thread of your story. You commenced to tell about the reward."

"Well, yes, I war comin' to that," continued Harry. "After ole Bilkins had given us boys a good bastin', and regulated his system, he returned to his class. Elevating his spectacles on his forehead, he bawled out:

"Can any one tell me how the desecrated township of Gomorrah is bounded?"

"On the north by Pole-cat creek, south by Muskeeter swamp, squashed Peg Long, bouncin' to her feet, when rip went her dress. The gum had stuck it, and snatched out a strip the hull length of the skirt. The boys began to giggle, the girls to titter behind their books, Peg to cry, and ole Bilkins to champ his bits. Down rushed the old dogwood switch with a dash-see-saw-saw-saw, and then, in tones of thunder, the culprit was called for. I had a notion to lay it to Dicky Howes, but then I thought of George Washington and his hatchet, and I riz to my feet and told the hull truth like a little man, thinkin' it would induce ole Bilky to ease up on me. But, hoppin' horns! you'd ort to 'a' seen the old tiger pant. He fairly danced, he war so mad. 'I'll larn ye,' he whistled, as he let his glasses fall to the floor, and before he could pick 'em up, one of the boys brushed 'em aside with his foot, another picked 'em up and passed 'em to the next, and in two seconds they were on t'other side of the house on Billy Trotter's face; but, you bet, Billy kept his big geography spread out well before his face, and winked at us boys around the corners. But the loss of his glasses give ole Bilkins a mad fit. 'Veneration,' he yelled like an Ojibway squaw, 'you, Harry Wilde, will provoke me to your destruction. My blood's bilin' hot, and I'll bleed him, stranger, for I thought I could hear it blubberin' in his veins; and so I concluded to make myself rare in that place, and so out I jumped at a winder and away I went. And out bounced ole Bilky, and away he started after me. I tell you, it war fun alive for the other boys to see ole Bilky's game legs go wabblin' across the meadow like wheels out of dish. Even ole Peg Long mopped out her eyes and swung her handkercher and yelled like a sick wild-cat. Wal, I took to the creek whar I knowed that war a deep hole, and jist as I reached the bank I dogged behind a big tree. In a minute the ole pettygog came teakin' up like a whirlwind and sweatin' like a Turk. He thought I'd dogged down into the water, or under the bank, and so he walked up and was leavin' over lookin' for me, when I slipped up behind him and dumped him into the water. It was mean in me, I know, but I done it to cool his blood. It'd 'a' made a wooden man laff to see him spout water. Oh, it war de-lightful, stranger, and I nearly killed myself laffin'. But ole Bilky got out and—so did I. He swore out a s'arch-warrant, or some law thing, to have me arrested for murder, and so I jist come off out here to look around St. Clair awhile. And I understand Bilkins offers five dollars reward for my arrest."

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the Indians' clubs, and with these he played lively upon the tufted skulls of the warriors. By a flank movement the captain was finally brought down, and two of the warriors seemed intent upon taking him alive, and would, doubtless, have succeeded, had it not been for the quick blows of Harry's club and the rending teeth of Belshazzar.

While engaged in liberating Rankin, a figure rushed suddenly upon our hero with a horrible imprecation upon his lips, but the youth greeted him with a blow that sent him reeling overboard into the water. But it was not until it was too late that he discovered he had committed an irreparable blunder—that it was Muckleeve, the guide, he had struck. He regretted the act, but felt justified, for the reason that in the excitement of the moment Muckleeve was rushing upon him with deadly intent, no doubt mistaking him for an enemy.

By this time but three savages were left to contend with, and one of these Harry soon knocked overboard. Another was struggling hand-to-hand with the young soldier, while the third, seeing the havoc made in their ranks by Harry's club, rushed upon the youth and grappled him. Together they rolled on the raft in deadly conflict.

The savage was far the heavier and stouter, but Harry was the more skillful, and proved as difficult to handle as an eel. The youth's club being of no further use to him now, he dropped it and endeavored to draw his knife. But this he was unable to do, for the savage, armed in a measure pinioned his. His movements were also somewhat hampered by his rifle, which was hung at his back, but, despite these disadvantages, he fought like a young tiger, giving the red-skin all he wanted to do in the hand-to-hand grapple.

Finally the lad saw that the red-skin's weight was an advantage he could not overcome, and that he must endeavor to free himself, while strength remained, from the powerful arms of the savage. He threw all his strength into a single effort, but without success. The limbs of the foe were like welded bands of steel. They whirled to and fro across the raft in rapid revolutions. Harry squirmed and wriggled like a serpent, at the same time shouting defiance in the ear of his antagonist.

At length they struggled to their feet and went spinning away across the raft and fell overboard. Both sunk from view, but they soon appeared to the surface again, struggling all the fiercer now that the water was confining for the victory over both. They fought in silence—that is, no word escaped their lips, for they found it prudent to keep their mouths shut and the water from their lungs. Their flying limbs beat and churned the water into a foam.

Suddenly a loud, deep bark rung out, and was succeeded by a plunge. It was the dog, Belshazzar, who, seeming to comprehend the perilous situation of his master, bounded to his assistance. Nor was the faithful animal a moment from his side. Happy Harry was almost exhausted when the dog swam up and seized the red skin by the throat, ending the conflict in a short time.

Keeping himself above water as well as he could in his almost breathless condition, until Belshazzar had dispatched the warrior, he then grasped the dog by the tail and was towed ashore.

Both dog and master were quite exhausted when they reached the bank, and crawling out of the water they threw themselves upon the beach for a moment's rest.

Harry now glanced out over the bay. He could see the raft and the two forms struggling in their death-throes upon it. The water in the bay was still, but at the same time there was a natural inclination of the current toward the shore, and the raft gradually moved down the bay until it reached the lake, when it soon was whirled by the current out on the bosom of the watery expanse.

"Great, bald-faced hornits, 'Shazzar!" exclaimed young Harry, "there goes that poor young captain to destruction, and we unable to help him! But we've done our duty, Bell; we done all we could until we were teetotally discombarated. We're tired, and wet as mops. It's a damper on us, old friend, and all because we're so unfortunate as to be boys. It always did seem to me that boys war the most persecuted set of critters that ever war inflicted on the world. And yet one can't jump out of babyhood into manhood; things here got to take their natural course. Now, if we'd been gals, Bell, we'd not be here to-night, but tucked away somewhere in a quiet nest of feathers and quilts. But what the use to lament a boy's a boy, and we can't make anything else out of him. Besides, we enjoy all this as only boys can enjoy fun. But poor Rankin! I hope he'll get through all right with that red-skin. I want to tell him something—something that he'd never have suspected, old dog. They say boys have a secret, and know more'n they ort to; but, 'Shazzar, a feller's got to know a heap to travel through this jassack of a country. Now, the captain may have a sight or book larnin', and know all about handlin' a sword, and military things, but they didn't help him to a knowledge of one thing—that is, of the border and its characters. If they only had, he'd not been trapped by a traitor!"

Belshazzar raised his eyes and gazed at the face of his young master as though he fully comprehended his words.

"Yes, Bell," continued the lad, "that man Muckleeve war a condemned traitor to Rankin, he war, for a cruel fact. I war him that had the trap arranged for the captain's reception. But, huppin' hornits, 'Shaz, I give the low-browed wretch a jolt across the organum that sent him to water. I don't know whether he got out or not—nor I don't care; but I do know he is a black-hearted traitor! Ah! now, Belshazzar, what is it, old pard?"

The dog started up with a low growl toward the woods.

The massive tread of a foot sounded near, and a moment later Happy Harry saw the giant figure of a white man appear from the dense shadows of the undergrowth.

"Great huppin' hornits and glory!" shouted the youth, springing to his feet and advancing toward the intruder. "It is my big friend—my dear friend, Long-Beard! It is, for a living fact!"

(To be continued.)

A court in Indiana has recently decided that there is no limit to the number of persons whom a girl may sue, simultaneously, for breach of promise. Think of that, you young scamps who are "going for" a half-dozen girls at once. Not only will it be well to confine yourself to one, but she should be placed under bonds not to sue if you want to back out.

A MEMORY

BY ABRIE CLEMENS MORROW.

Five-year old Jennie, tiny and fair,
With liquid blue eyes and golden hair,
Walked in the garden with papa, where
Early flowers were springing;

Hating, she lifted her lily pure face,
The sunlight kissed with its glowing grace,
And said, as her father ceased his pace,
"Papa, didn't God make himself?"

"My darling, He made this world of ours;
Budding trees and beautiful flowers;
The air we breathe, our cloudland towers;
But our God has lived forever."

Parents and child in the twilight stay
When father questions in thoughtful way,
"Our girl was thinking of what to say,
"Papa, didn't God make himself?"

The child looked up with an eager gaze,
Sure she could answer mother's amaze,
And said, in the sunset's dying haze,
"Papa, you say it and see what you think."

Now we walk in the garden alone,
Our darling little Jennie has flown
Up to a place by the Savior's throne;
"For of such is the kingdom of heaven."

Nick Whiffles' Pet:

NED HAZEL, THE BOY TRAPPER.

BY CAPT. J. F. C. ADAMS.

CHAPTER XIX.

MORE LIGHT.

YOUNG Ned Hazel was happy, as he left his friends on the edge of Elk River, and started through the woods for his home. He whistled and sang, for everything looked bright and cheerful to him.

He was certain now that Miona was very little, if any, less than an angel, and that when he and she grew to womanhood, they were intended by Heaven for each other.

"I love Nick," he mused, as he walked along, "but I am not going to spend my life as he does his, in the woods. There is a great world around me, and I must see it, and make my mark in it. I have got to be a father somewhere, and I begin to feel like getting acquainted with him."

He was full of dreams of a glorious future, and of the fortune he was going to carve for himself.

"I shall make Miona proud of me some day," he added, with a glowing face. "I have grown to be a big boy, without knowing much of books, but I have the will and the brains, and I'll do it."

Ah! the enthusiasm of youth! if it could only follow us through manhood, down the slope of life, what wonders we might accomplish! What heroes all of us would be! What victories the historian would have to write opposite our names!

"Yes, sir—that's what I'm going to do—hello!"

The last exclamation was caused by the sight of a man, that came into view just in front of him. The lad paused a moment, and then, as he recognized Mr. Mackintosh, he bade him good-morning and walked toward him.

"I am looking for Nick Whiffles; I suppose you can direct me to his cabin?"

"Yes; it's close by, but you won't find him home."

"I am sorry about that," said Mackintosh, "for I have come on special business. What time to-day will he be back?"

"Not to-day, nor to-morrow, unless it's very late to-morrow night."

The superintendent showed by his looks that he was greatly disappointed. He stood as if debating with himself.

"Come to the cabin with me, and wait there till he comes back."

Mackintosh accepted the invitation in an absent sort of way, and the two walked silently in the direction of the cabin. Reaching there, Ned entered first, and the first thing that attracted his eye was the "baby clothes," lying upon the ground.

"Hello!" he exclaimed, as he stooped down and picked them up. "Nick went off in such a hurry that he forgot to put them away."

"Let me see them, please," said Mackintosh, who was only a step or two behind; "these are the very articles about which I came to see Nick."

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along the banks of the Saskatchewan. We remained there only a few days, when, with a party of friends, we came further south to Elk River, where we engaged in fishing for a couple of weeks.

"As there was sometimes danger from wild animals, we frequently anchored our canoe out in the river and slept in that. One night I was belated in returning to where I had left you and your mother. She was in such rugged health that I had little fear in leaving her alone for a time; but I was later than I intended in getting back, it being past midnight when I reached the shore where I had left her."

"I found her asleep on the bank, but you and the canoe were gone. I awoke her in some surprise to know what it meant. She was more amazed than I, for she had anchored out in the river, and lay down to sleep there, waiting for me to rouse her by calling to her."

"But the truth soon came out. Mary was a somnambulist, and in her sleep she had paddled ashore, and let the boat float down stream with you in it."

"As may be supposed, we started, almost distracted, to hunt for you. That terrible search I can never forget. At the end of two days we found the canoe, but you were gone!"

"I concluded at once that you had waked up, and, without knowing your danger, had crawled over the side of the canoe and was drowned. Then we spent days in searching for your body, but failed, of course. Your mother clung to the belief that you had been stolen by some Indian, and to gratify her I continued the search."

"She clung to her belief for years, and it was only a short time ago that she gave you up and returned to England. I had so completely lost all hope, that even when I heard what you told me the other day, I was not convinced."

"What is my name?"

"Edward Mackintosh; Nick got the first part right."

"I have a canoe," said the boy; "let's go down the river and meet Nick."

This was agreed to, and they started off at once.

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"Edward Mackintosh; Nick got the first part right."

"I have a canoe," said the boy; "let's go down the river and meet Nick."

This was agreed to, and they started off at once.

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"What is my name?"

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the Blackfeet, and then, if she still desired to return to her friends, she should be free to do so.

This was a great falling off from the original purpose of the Blackfoot chief; but his friendship for Nick Whiffles had a powerful influence in the matter, but, like a true Indian, his secret intention was that when five years were up, she should still remain with him and become his daughter-in-law, in spite of herself and everybody!

And equally, Nick Whiffles' intention was that she should never marry any Blackfoot—he had other purposes in view!

This arrangement was hardly completed, when Mackintosh and Ned Hazel made their appearance in their canoe. They had pursued their way leisurely down-stream, meeting them at this place.

Poor Ned was in consternation when he learned all that had been done, but while Miona was a heroine, he could be a hero. As he took hands with her and bid her farewell he whispered:

"Remember, I promise to come for you!" His face, as well as his tone and words, told how deep was his feeling for the beautiful child of the wood.

"I shall expect you," she replied, fixing her dark eyes upon him, from which gleamed the light of pure, abiding love.

Then she was transferred to the other boat, and the sad parting took place—a parting long to be remembered by every participant.

Nick Whiffles listened to the story of Mackintosh, and said in his own characteristic manner:

"I'm glad as a man can be, but it's hard, by mighty! and I'm sorry, too!"

And the strong-hearted man, who never quailed in the face of danger, turned away and wept.

It was like robbing the parent bird of its nestling; or tearing from the sturdy oak the vine which had lovingly, through rains and storms, through sunny days and nights of sweet repose, clung to it for growth and protection.

Down the river floated the little cavalcade—Nick Whiffles on the lead. Was the old man so loth to part with Ned that he would not leave him? At the Portage to the English river the party "shored," and passed on foot, through the forest, over to the stream down which to float to Fort Churchill. And yet, Old Nick left them not. Down to the fort they dropped and Ned and Nick Whiffles passed its portals together, hand clasped in hand.

What was the excitement and joy in the fort over the remarkable events which had transpired, and a general jollification took place, while the company's transport, lying at the little dock, was carefully fitted up for three additional passengers.

The third day witnessed the departure. The white wings of the trim brig-rigged vessel were shaken out; and slowly she headed for the northward. On the dock stood Nick Whiffles, with bare head, waving his cap in adieu to his dear boy, whom the seas were to separate from him. Ned, standing on the after-deck, gazed upon, and signaled to the dear old man, until, down in the horizon, disappeared departed ones and those left behind.

"Miona is my only son, now!" murmured the old forester, as, leaving the dock, he dropped into his canoe, and soon was lost in the mazes of the great forest around.

"The gals got me round the heart-strings, an' when my boy comes ag'in, as he promised, she shall be thar to welcome him, or Nick Whiffles' skulpin' be dryin' in a Blackfoot lodge."

(To be continued.)

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In summer's sunny zone
My castle stands alone,
And rare its pictured walls,
While in its stately halls
Soft music's dreamy tone
In sweetest cadence falls.

Within a pleasant vale—
And here the moonlight pale
Steals on the silent hours,
O'er tree and tender flowers,
And there an evening sail,
And here the vine-clad bowers.

And the well-loved are here,
But not a falling tear;
No thought of swift decay,
Or this encumbering clay,
But Heaven seems very near,
And earth so far away!

Then all this gathering grime
I shed not, nor the rime
That chills my air below;
Let black winds rudely blow,
I dwell not in this gloom—
I live in my chateau!

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CHAPTER XII.

THE LIVING DEAD.

FRANK HAVELSTOCK walked slowly, thoughtfully, away from his interview with Ethel, switching off the daisy-stars with his light cane, his bold, sinister eyes bent downward, as if to hide the emotion he knew must be mirrored there.

He didn't look like a lover who has just claimed the assurance of the affection of the one dearest to him of all on earth, and proud, sensitive Ethel would have shrunk from him in utter, pained horror, could she have read his thoughts as he walked from Mrs. Lawrence's cottage to Tanglewood—a long walk, but very pleasant, that breezy summer late-afternoon.

"I don't, for the life of me, tell what has possessed me, to actually fall in love sufficiently with any one to propose marriage. I, the nearest of him to Theo Lexington, to whom all the magnificent estate will come, if I still keep myself in my haughty cousin's good graces. And my sweetheart, only a queenly girl with a face like an angel's, and as pure as a snowdrop! I don't wonder I have succumbed when I recall her wondrous beauty, that, in all probability, will one day grace Tanglewood's aristocratic halls. She's poor—poor as poverty, I know, as well as that her impecuniosity is only equalled by her pride and high-toned principles; but she comes of good stock, I suppose, as Mrs. Lawrence says she is related, somehow, she believed, to the family of her husband. She insinuated, very disgustingly—right at the cat—that Ethel was really Mr. Lawrence's own child, born previous to his first marriage."

Havelstock's thoughts ran about in this direction the entire distance of his walk. He had met no one, or been passed by no one, until just now, as he came in sight of the porter's lodge at Tanglewood.

A gentleman in a traveling suit, whose dust and general disorder denoted a long journey, had checked his horse at the closed bronze gates, and was holding a parley with the non-communative porter—a rather crusty old fellow, who fully appreciated the dignity of his position as porter at Tanglewood gates, and who felt the high honor of serving such an exclusive, aristocratic family as the Lexingtons.

Havelstock was still too far off to perfectly scan the features of the stranger, but he saw the fine figure, the bold, upright bearing, the independent style that verged on recklessness. He saw the animal the horseman rode was proud-spirited, almost ungovernable, of handsome build and stylish air, which, together with the carefully firm hand with which the rider held him in, was an evidence, in Havelstock's estimation, of the stranger's right to the title of gentleman.

He heard his voice before he approached sufficiently near to discover the features, that were partially disguised by the slouched hat over the brows. He heard a clear, attractive voice, that uttered bold, straightforward sentences; a voice that was strangely familiar, yet wholly unrecognizable.

He quickened his pace just as the horseman touched his whip to the glossy flank, and in a second they met—one in pale, passionate wrath, the other in a surprise almost a terror, that momentarily struck him speechless.

The stranger brought his horse suddenly to its haunches as he caught a glimpse of Havelstock's astonished countenance, and a lurid smile made the hot passion in his face the more awful by contrast.

"Well, old fellow, you seem surprised to see me—strange, too, that you recognize me. No one else has."

"Good heavens, surprised! you ask if I am surprised to see a man everybody has thought dead and buried these seventeen years or more! Is it really you, Vincy? Good heavens, what will Georgia do?"

"It is really I, Carleton Vincy, who, as you remark, has been, to all intents and purposes, dead—and with good effect, it seems, since, Enoch Arden like, I come home to find my wife married to another husband."

His eyes darkened ominously, and he glanced menacingly in the direction of Tanglewood, whose large, dome-like observatory was reflecting the rays of the setting sun.

Havelstock was watching Vincy closely, strange, wild thoughts running rampant through his brain, that lent almost satanic brightness to his bold black eyes. He remained perfectly composed, however, while he measured his man critically.

"You have not seen Georgia—you have not been at Tanglewood?"

"I have been here since I landed this morning. I look like making a call on Mrs. Lexington, don't I?"

His voice was so fraught with bitterness that even Havelstock thought what a terrible enemy this man would make.

"It is delightful, isn't it?" Vincy went on, "to leave a wife and baby and go off to mend one's fortunes, and then, the object accomplished, to come home to—"

He pointed his hand at the gleaming tower again, in a gesture of rage.

Havelstock's eyes began to gleam—it would take so little effort to further inflame this jealous, wrathful man. And away down the future, with his sinister eyes of prophecy, he saw the results of the work he would do—all his own way.

"You remember, Vincy, that you were never very good to Georgia. You remember

you neglected her after your marriage, and for several months neglected to support her and her child."

He watched the result of his words. Vincy flushed darkly.

"I know it—she was such a poor, miserable, sickly thing, always complaining, and the young one in a chronic state of squall. Besides, between you and I, Havelstock, you know how ugly and thin she was. I got tired of her."

"I know it," said Havelstock, quietly. "And after you had left her unprotected, for a long while after your departure—no one knew whether or why—Mrs. Vincy instituted a suit for divorce, and received her liberty, with full permission to marry again."

Vincy dug his spurs into his horse's side in a sudden impulse of passion, that made him plunge wildly. Havelstock stepped back, enjoying with all his heart the havoc his information made, the passions the news aroused.

"Divorced? She dared get a divorce from me—to marry Theodore Lexington! I hated her when she had supposed herself a widow and free to marry again; but now, when I know she deliberately severed her allegiance to me—Havelstock, it's lucky she doesn't stand where you do—I'd shoot her in her tracks!"

His face worked convulsively, his eyes seemed to radiate fire.

"You wouldn't hate her if you saw her now, Vincy. She has developed into the most exquisitely beautiful woman you ever saw—slender, yet of perfectly symmetrical proportions, and as proud and haughty as ever."

"I presume Lexington idolizes her, then—the sound!"

"He worships her; but there is some sort of trouble between them, I believe, about the child, I think—your child, you remember. It died while it was little, and since then—"

He hesitated, as if he was loath to uncover family secrets. He meant to inspire Vincy with more jealousy and rage, and then make him an eager, willing, unconscious instrument in his hands.

"It died, did it? Well, it might as well have done so as to have lived to see to-day. I didn't care that for the child"—he snapped the lash of his whip—"but I'll have a reckoning with Georgia."

"It will be the death of her, I warn you, Vincy. Lexington never dreamed she was a divorced woman, and it nearly drove him crazy when he discovered her deceit. He supposed her merely an honorable widow. Your unexpected appearance will put the finishing touch to his already wounded, mortified pride."

A gleam of satisfaction lighted Vincy's eyes. He bent over his saddle and peered closely into Havelstock's face.

"You are his cousin—you are intimate at Tanglewood, at least I suppose so, judging from past precedence; you know exactly how the land lies—how Georgia is circumstanced; how justly I hate her and her husband; how willingly I would torment them to death as part payment for my position in the affair. Will you strike hands?"

There was a hundred-fold more meaning in his eyes and voice, than even in his unmistakable language, and Havelstock's heart throbbed with an emotion he could scarcely conceal.

"I will think of it. You and I were intimate friends twenty years ago, when we were young and foolish, Vincy; and then we shared secrets with each other we scarcely care to recall, even now. I can trust you, I know; and you can trust me, fully. I can be a safe ally, and render you such assistance as no one else can."

"And if I remember aright, there never has been any particular affection between you and my wife—Mr. Lexington's wife, begging your pardon! You disliked Mrs. Vincy, I remember."

"No more, than I detest Mrs. Lexington, even while I know her to be as pure, as beautiful, as thoroughly noble a woman as ever lived. I dislike her because our natures are so exactly dissimilar, because she seems to shrink from me with an instinctive dread; because she makes me feel as I don't like to feel—every way her inferior, morally."

Vincy smiled, darkly.

"You are candid, Havelstock, and I will admit as much. When she lived with me, it seemed as if every look of her eyes, every act of her hands—even when she rocked her baby on her breast—reproved me, dumbly. And yet, Havelstock, she is a wife that any man might be proud of, if she has added such beauty to her mental attractions."

He said it eagerly, and Havelstock saw the working of the heaven.

"My only fear is, that when you see her, you will worship her as madly as my husband does. You will also have to contend against the galling fact that you once possessed her, while she is now forever beyond your reach."

His artful words had their desired effect. Vincy compressed his lips tightly.

"I'll see her to-morrow, and the result remains to be known. Where can I see you to-morrow?"

"Nowhere to-morrow, or for a fortnight. I shall be married in the morning to the prettiest little girl you ever came across, down yonder."

He pointed his cane over the way he had come.

Vincy stared in unfeigned amazement.

"Married! you, an old bird, caught with such poor chaff as a girl's face! Havelstock, you're a fool! Why, man, you are losing the good sense that distinguished you at twenty-three, when that blue-eyed little actress—"

Havelstock frowned.

"Hold on, Vincy! Don't mention that girl's name in the same day with my betrothed wife, Miss Mary's a lady."

"Oh, all right—I only hope you won't turn out as big a blank as I have in the lottery. She is rich, I dare say, or you wouldn't put your head in the noose."

Havelstock flushed, and shrugged his shoulders.

"She hasn't a cent in the world. It's a clear case of infatuation, you see—and I—not as young as I was once. By George, though, Vincy, I believe I do love her better than any woman I ever saw. And I didn't know her a month ago."

Vincy's eyes widened, incredulously.

"You'd have been wise to have waited until you were sure you wouldn't tire of her. To-morrow! It is sudden, Havelstock. What will Lexington say to your bringing a wife to Tanglewood?"

Havelstock's lip curled.

"Do you suppose I shall take my wife there? I shall hire a cottage in Harlem, I think, and I can run down to Tanglewood as easily from there as from New York."

"Then you are not staying here?"

"I have been, and shall still consider it head-quarters. There are several pretty girls there now, which makes it pleasant."

"Why didn't you marry one of them, you foolish man?"

"Heiresses of several hundred thousand don't generally condescend to a thousand-a-year husband, do they?"

Vincy laughed.

"Well, you know your own business. See me when you call at the St. Nicholas."

He rode away, Havelstock's eyes watching him with evil satisfaction.

CHAPTER XIII.

HOODWINKING SHARP EYES.

OF mightier import to him, than even the anticipated change in Havelstock's life, was the astonishing, exciting fact of Carleton Vincy's sudden, fateful appearance, at a time when it only needed a sight of him, a knowledge of his existence, to set in executive order all the scheming propensities of this man.

He had hitherto worked alone in his plans of treachery for the overthrow of his cousin's happiness, and the eventual reward such an overthrow would bring; but now—and he thought, with a sneer of triumph, that Satan never deserted his own—Carleton Vincy, Georgia's first husband, with his anger, his jealousy, his hatred toward the man who had usurped his place—Carleton Vincy called it usurpation—with his refining love for the beautiful woman who was once his wife, and the revenge he felt like heaping upon her for her treatment of him in his absence—this combination of evil passions was certainly sent to his hand for use—and use them he would.

Tanglewood had never looked so fair, or seemed so entirely in Havelstock's power, as when he walked through the lodge-gates, after his interview with Vincy. He saw the whole of the course he intended to pursue regarding Tanglewood, and Tanglewood's wealth, from beginning to end, as if a map were spread before him, with every step marked.

He went over his plans concerning Ethel—pretty, loving Ethel, the very thought of whom made his wicked heart throb with the purest emotion it ever had known.

He thought of Ida Wynne, and wondered what sort of a look would flash over her face if she knew he was so deeply interested in another besides herself. Not that he cared—Ida Wynne would never be anything to him—only he thought it best that neither she nor any one at Tanglewood should know of his private affairs. To the Lexingtons, to the world, except to Carleton Vincy, he would be the same man as he had been.

So his marriage was disposed of, to his entire satisfaction, and he walked up the marble steps to Ida Wynne, who was waiting at the head of the flight, in her riding-habit, her dark blue skirt gathered in one hand, one of her little plump feet patted the Persian rug in pretty impatience.

"You promised to have Flirt and Comet at the mount ten minutes ago. Mr. Havelstock, I have a half-idea of not going at all, now."

"I beg ten thousand pardons, Miss Wynne, but I was detained beyond my intentions. I'll order the horses at once."

He looked so penitent, and so handsome, "If you were detained longer than you expected, there has been a lady in the case."

She said it purposely; she was a trifle jealous; and Havelstock, with an inward thrill as he remembered his interview with Ethel, thoroughly enjoyed tormenting her.

"A lady—a lady; and Miss Wynne awaiting me! I thought you were a better friend than to do me such injustice."

"I am not unjust, am I? I know I am just dying to be on Flirt's back—and that's all the emotion I am at present capable of."

Somehow, he had succeeded in making her feel piqued; somehow, she believed her premise was correct, and there was a lady in the case.

Well, who cared?—not she! and with a mighty effort to feel as indifferent as she managed to appear, and in which she ignominiously failed, and Havelstock secretly exulted over it, Ida waited until the horses were brought around, and they were off.

It was not as delightful as she had anticipated—this *lute-a-tele* horseback ride with Mr. Havelstock. Until now, Ida had imagined he had, if only a little, for her; and now, there had suddenly come a suspicion and a doubt into her heart. A suspicion that there was "a lady in the case" who was not Ida Wynne; a doubt that—oh! the shooting pain of that thought!—that perhaps her sweet dream, vague as sweet, was, after all, an illusion.

So Ida was reserved, contrary, contradicting, as the two galloped over the macadamized roads—the one torn with curious, jealous unrest, the other on the eve of his wedding-day.

They rode along four or five miles on the straight road leading in the direction of the village, at whose straggling suburb it diverged, one, the left, leading exactly past Mrs. Lawrence's cottage, the other out into the more open country, and ultimately joining the river road, that ran for miles along the Hudson.

This last was decidedly the pleasantest, and was one most generally used; and at the convergence of the two roads, Havelstock halted slightly.

"The river road, of course, Miss Ida. It will be delightfully cool."

For the first time in his life, Frank Havelstock blundered, and Ida Wynne, with a naturally quick perception sharpened by jealous suspicion, understood on the instant the faint anxiety of his tone; an anxiety he felt, and boldly endeavored to conceal under his positive address.

"Why 'of course' the river road, Mr. Havelstock! I have been on it dozens of times, and never once through there."

She pointed to the road that passed Ethel Mary's door, and looked half defiantly, half triumphantly, at Havelstock.

He interpreted that look at a glance. He knew it meant she was jealous, and was determined to see for herself if there was anything to see. He smiled coolly at her patent restlessness, and then bowed over his saddle.

"As Miss Wynne pleases. Only—don't hold me responsible for consequences."

He met her eyes a second—his, tantalizingly innocent; hers, angered, gloomy.

"Consequences? Oh, the lady, you mean. Pray don't flatter yourself I care."

He bit his lip to keep from laughing at her—poor, wounded child!

"Oh—I meant the dust," he returned; and Ida knew she had overshot her mark.

They galloped along, and Havelstock saw her draw up her pony as they came to the first cottage on the outskirts of the village. He was amused now, and actually hoped Ethel were visible somewhere.

Ida's horse fell into a slow walk, before they came to Mrs. Lawrence's cottage. Havelstock caught a glimpse of a gloriously golden head beside the gate; and he saw Ida's quick eyes eying her keenly.

As the two passed, Ethel looked up—her whole heart in her eyes, as she bowed and smiled, while Havelstock saluted her profoundly.

"Miss Ethel, good-evening."

Ida gave him one look, then rode on. She had seen what she wanted.

"Ethel, Ethel! I'd know her again in Africa if we met there. How I hate her!"

CHAPTER XIV.

A BRIDE IN BLACK.

IF Ida Wynne had been angrily surprised to find her jealous suspicions correct, and certainly made not a little envious of the radiant beauty of the golden-haired girl at the gate, she gave no sign, beyond that one look she tendered Havelstock as they rode by. It was a look that puzzled him somewhat, because it combined so many emotions—wrath, jealousy, envy, pain, reproach, despair; but it told him plainer than any act of Ida's ever had before done that she loved him, hopelessly, it seemed.

Her mood changed suddenly, after they had ridden a dozen yards away. Her cheeks flushed, her eyes fairly scintillated with excitement, as she laughed and talked vehemently.

On the whole, it rather pleased Havelstock. His was such an insuperably selfish nature that it was very essential to his happiness to know that some one—any one, for that matter—suffered, as Ida certainly did, on his account.

So he watched her with a keen relish, and while he purposely added fuel to the flames of her passionate disappointment by speaking in a low, caressing voice, or meeting her eyes with peculiar meaning in his own, he was all the time thinking how immeasurably superior Ethel Mary was to this girl, bright, fiery, witching though she was.

And the two rode along, whose life-threads were fastened to almost inextricable entanglement, who little dreamed of their future doom, who never once associated golden-haired, dark-eyed Ethel with their own combined intricacies.

Of the three Ethel was decidedly the happiest, not even excepting her betrothed lover. The shadow of death had indeed darkened over her, and she was almost friendless in the wide world; and yet she was so frightfully happy as she watched her lover away, beside Ida Wynne's side, that she wondered if it was not wicked of her. She loved him so, she was so confident of him—that sure trustfulness that is the groundwork of a true woman's love, that, once destroyed, is as surely followed by the death of affection as cause is followed by effect.

As yet, Ethel believed Frank Havelstock to be all a lover, a gentleman, could be. As yet, brightest skies beamed over her head. Ah! if she had but seen even the edge of the shadow of the darkness that was doomed to engulf her!

But she was so happy as she watched Frank Havelstock ride away, his splendid figure set off to its best advantage on horseback, his impassioned eyes turned once back to her with a world of eloquent meaning in them.

So handsome, so polished, so loving—and, her own betrothed husband, whose name and fortune she would share before many more suns had lowered so far as to-day's had done—and its almost level rays were shining in her sweet face, as if in glad congratulation.

Within the cottage dinner was over, and Mrs. Lawrence had felt able to indulge in a melancholy gossip with an inrunning neighbor. And Ethel, standing with uncovered head in the warm, soft June sunset, felt that she had, of a verity, come to the very threshold of her life, and was only waiting to cross—to the other side, to Frank Havelstock.

She was mentally casting her own horoscope as she stood there, absently tearing a pink-petaled rose into perfumed fragments, with the dying day all around her, the early, serious twilight creeping on and on.

She was bound to be happy. She loved him so dearly; she was so proud of him; she would be such a good, thoughtful wife, with such quick care for her husband's comfort, such earnest desire for his welfare, that he would love her better every day.

She drew her modest plans of their home—a small, cozy house, with a parlor where vines and flowers and mosses and canary-birds should make summer all the year round; with a dining-room, with the table spread *à la-tête*, with always a tiny bouquet of flowers for Frank's place, or a bunch of cool, green foliage.

Then there should be such a convenient kitchen—and she gloried in the prospect of being its sole presiding genius. Such miracles of desserts as she would make—cheap, delicious; such marvelous cakes and jellies for Frank and herself. No grim phantoms of the inevitable dish-washing, oil-cloth flanneling, and backyard sweeping annoyed her, because every such duty would be gilded with the one sweet thought—for Frank; and so, this brave, sweet, loving girl went on to the crisis of her life.

The sky was glittering with stars when Ethel, almost reluctantly, went up to her room; for the first time since she had an accepted lover, she thought to herself, with a soft flush on her cheeks, and a darkening of the deep shadows in her eyes.

The starlight was very brilliant, and Ethel did not feel in the mood for a more brilliant light; so she threw open the green Venetian shutters and drew a low rock-velvet chair to the window, and with a white zephyr shawl around her shoulders, over which she let her beautiful golden hair down, in all its lustrous luxuriance, Ethel sat, and thought, and dreamed, and joyed, all the short, fragrant summer night. And when the latest stars that had helped her keep her vigil faded and paled before the coming dawn, the morning found her fresh as a lark, and filled with an intense, solemn joy. All that day she busied herself in her delightful preparations; quietly acquainted Mrs. Lawrence with the fact of her marriage on the morrow—and then—waited for the morning to come—her wedding morning. It dawned bright and sunny; and she was up betimes.

Her simple toilette was readily made—a black silk, with blonde ruchings at neck and wrists, and a white *crepe* tie—so becoming to her face and figure, so very suitable for a bride who was in mourning still. She smiled at her reflection in the mirror—smiled at the idea of there being a suspicious presentiment connected with the color of her wedding-dress.

She did not fear future ill, certainly not because her dress was black; a love, she thought, that could presage evil from so foolish a cause, was a love that bore no resemblance to hers, that was so tender, devoted, so trustful.

She was down in the dining-room before Mrs. Lawrence, who came in trailing an elaborate breakfast wrapper of white lawn, and innumerable black ribbon streamers flying around her.

She came up to the girl with a smile on her face, with both hands outreached in a gushing welcome, that made Ethel instinctively recoil in disgust.

"Good-morning, and a host of good wishes, Ethel, for I have found to-day is your wedding-day. I am so delighted that you considered and acted upon my advice in accepting Mr.

Havelstock, although whatever Mr. Verne will do I can't see."

Ethel's lip curled a little at Mrs. Lawrence's suggestion, but she withdrew her hand that had been grasped in the lady's as gently as she could. She had no intention of any final scene.

"I suppose I should thank you for your congratulations, although I must be permitted to disabuse your mind of the idea that I acted upon any one's advice in promising to marry Mr. Havelstock."

There was a ring of contemptuous pride in Ethel's voice that galled the lady considerably, but she had determined to attempt to obliterate the remembrance of months of studied neglect and harshness by the attention of an hour, not understanding, in her selfish narrowness of soul, how supremely impossible such an attempt would be, to any one, particularly a girl of Ethel's temperament.

So, swallowing her ire, and consoling herself with the thought that it would soon be over—this irksome necessity:

"I did not know what hour you had agreed upon for the ceremony, consequently I was obliged to order breakfast at the usual hour, delighted as I would have been to have postponed it in order to have enjoyed Mr. Havelstock's company."

She walked pompously to the speaking-tube, and ordered the dishes up at once, then returned to Ethel's side.

There was one thing I wanted to speak of before we separate, Ethel, and that is—I was rather harsh the other day—yesterday—when I got fairly talking to you. But when you've had all the trouble I've had, and seen what I've seen, we'll see if your temper is as even as it is now, without a thing in the world to annoy you."

A faint smile crept to Ethel's lip at that concluding remark, and then a natural desire to triumph over her enemy seized her; a desire that she instantly spurned as unworthy herself.

"I have seen trouble already, Mrs. Lawrence, but from to-day I expect brightest skies to shine over me, and when I am so happy it is hardly possible I would refuse you the forgiveness you ask. I desire we should part, as I have always attempted to be, friends. You know best why my efforts have been unsuccessful."

She was very grave, even in her sweetness; very firm in her gentle vindication of herself.

The sound of the approaching dumb-waiter from the realms below, and the simultaneous entrance of Mrs. Lawrence's solitary man servant, necessarily put an end to the conversation. Ethel noticed that her favorite dishes had suddenly been remembered, or magically discovered, and she felt a thrill of gratitude at the courteous attention.

They partook of their breakfast in quiet leisure; and just as the last trace of it had been removed, there drove a Clarence up the door, from which Mr. Havelstock sprang, and entered the front yard.

Mrs. Lawrence met him at the gate with effusive zeal.

"Oh, you naughty man, to be carrying Ethel off at this conscienceless hour of the morning!"

"Ethel doesn't object, I am sure," he returned, with an ardent glance at the girl, as he crossed the threshold and went up to her, where she sat by the bow window, shy, silent, content.

He bent and just touched her cheek with his lips, and found time to whisper a word:

"Little darling! little bride!"

How blissfully sweet it was to Ethel, and she wondered whether earth had not suddenly been transformed to Paradise. She arose to get her hat and gloves, but Mrs. Lawrence ostentatiously forbade.

"Not at all, Ethel. I will ring for Margery to bring them at once, Mr. Havelstock!"

"We have no time to spare," he returned. "I want to catch the 10.20 for the city, and it leaves us not a half-hour to drive to the chapel and then over to Tanglewood station."

Mark. They knew that death was abroad in the forest that night. With that black charge hanging over their heads—while the honest portion of the Windy Gapers believed them guilty of abducting Edna Brand—punishment would swiftly follow capture. This was the fear that assailed the two friends—that Mark, unsuspecting danger, had fallen into the hands of the enraged miners.

"Look here, pard," sharply cried Old Business, his hand falling heavily upon Pike's shoulder. "That's played out. You brace up, brush the cobwebs outen your eyes, an' be a man, or durned if I don't mount ye an' chaw your ear like pizen—you hear me?"

"What do you want with me?" the old miner asked, as he arose painfully from his cramped position. "You haven't hearn nuthin' of Mark?"

"No, n'r I don't reckon we will, nuther, ef we stay here till the cows come home," was the testy reply. "Sugar in a rag! won't ye wake up!—you act jest like ye was fast asleep w' yer eyes open!"

"Yes—I have been asleep—dreaming of the past—the dead past," muttered Pike, passing one hand slowly across his face. "Yes—it must have been a dream, for she's dead—dead years ago."

"What're you tryin' to git through ye, anyhow?" muttered Old Business, his fingers closing tightly upon Pike's arm. "What ye bin dreamin' about—who's she, anyhow?"

"My child—little Helen. I saw her to-night—last night, I mean," softly uttered the old man.

"I knowed it!" and the hunter's eyes flashed. "Say, pard, how mought ye be called, when you're to hum, anyhow?"

"My name's Pike—Lafe Pike, which is sometimes made Lengthy, fer short, 'cause I'm so tall. You ain't bin drinkin', old man?" A shade crept over the face of Old Business. He was plainly disappointed at the abrupt change in his comrade, who now appeared his usual self. But he adroitly masked his feelings, whatever they were, and said:

"I don't reckon that's much use in our waitin' any longer. Ef the lad was comin' a-tall, he'd bin here afore now. That's only one reason; he's got into trouble somehow, somewhere. That's what we must find out; an' the sooner we set about it, the quicker we'll git done."

"Listen, pard," said Pike, touching Old Business on the arm. "I ain't much on the talk—never was, an' then I've passed through enough in my time to suit a preacher. But I kin foller a lead as far as the next mornin'. You can't guess the hafe what Mark has bin to me, n'r the hafe what I'd willin' go through fer his sake. Ef them durned mole-eyed galoots hev captured him, we must git him free, no matter what's the odds. Ef they've did him hurt—waa, a' undertaker 'd make his 'pendent fortune in these parts at a dollar a head fer plantin' karkidges—you hear me?"

"We'll go cahoots in that, Lengthy. But whar's the use in borrowin' trouble long's we've got a stake left? The fust thing is to find out what has really happened. How kin we do that? By strikin' the lad's trail an' follerin' it to the end."

"You'll hev to play a lone hand thar, pard. I couldn't trail a sick kitten to-day. My head's chuckfull o' cobwebs, but I'll do my best."

"You kin keep a look-out fer snags—that's all you need do; I'll tend to the rest. Talk 'bout trackin' a muskeeter or a bumble-bee on a dark night—I kin do it, ten times over o' mine, an' never faze a ha'r! That's right whar I live, it is! You jest come 'long o' me, an' ef I don't teach you a lesson in woodcraft, you kin chaw my ear fer a month, an' I'll never kick."

Though Old Business spoke in a confident tone, and continued his whimsical remarks as they strode rapidly along, his mind was far from being at ease. He knew that something serious must have occurred to keep Mark from the rendezvous, and he feared that the young man had fallen in with some of the enraged miners from Windy Gap. If so, Austin must have been captured or killed, since his absence could be in no other way be accounted for.

Yet, despite his deep interest in the matter, Old Business went systematically to work, with a cool, steady judgment that left nothing essential undone.

"Now, pard," he said, as they paused upon a rocky ridge, "right here's whar our head-work must begin. You spoke o' cobwebs in your brain o' thar's any in your eyes, you must brush 'em out. This is nuthin' ground to trail over, an' I reckon my hands 'll be full 'thout lookin' out fer humans. You must do this—you understand?"

"You kin count on me. I'm all right now. 'Twas jest one o' my old spells tuck me. Sometimes I reckon I'll go clean crazy like—"

"Like who?" asked Old Business, as Pike abruptly paused.

"Like anybody. I reckon we'd better be movin'. We're burnin' daylight," was the sharp reply.

"Good enough! but I'll trail ye yet," muttered the old hunter, his eyes glowing. "You understand, then? I'm to trail, while you kiver me."

Pike nodded, and then the comrades passed down to the valley, keeping well covered, though there were no signs to create uneasiness. Then, motioning Pike to keep in the rear, Old Business slowly crossed the valley in a zig-zag line. On his return, he paused, bent low down and gilded along a few paces, then beckoned to Pike.

"The boy was safe enough when he passed 'long here, 't an'rate," he said, quietly.

"You only guess at it," said Pike, impatiently, after a careful examination of the flinty ground. "A elephant's foot couldn't make no print here!"

"Mark ain't no elephant, though he's a boss in some things. Yit here's his trail—ef not plain as the nose on your rang, still it's a fa'r trail, consid'ring. Now to my eyes, thar's the print of his right foot, plain as daylight. Here's the toe—it turned over that bit o' flint an' pressed that one deeper down. You see this—that's whar a nail in his boot-heels scratched the stone. Thar is only one trail. 'Twas made last night, 'cause the dew has fell on it. We know Mark 'lowed to come this way; put this an' that together, an' you've got the answer."

"You may be right—I reckon ye air, though I don't know much 'bout sech doin's; but let's push on. I can't rest easy until I know what's come to the boy."

"All right; I ain't much ahind ye on that point, anyhow. You jest keep a good lookout—I reckon them galoots I fooled so slick last night, 'll be on the hunt fer me to-day, an' ef they spot us fust, it's good-bye, John!"

A few hundred yards further on, Old Business paused, with a grunt of satisfaction, and pointed at the ground just before him. There, upon a little patch of ground, kept moist by a tiny spring that bubbled from beneath a huge boulder, was a clearly defined footprint.

"You was right—that's his foot!" cried

Pike, eagerly. "Look thar—I put that patch on myself!" and he pointed out a rude outline, where the boot-sole had been mended.

"Jist so it satisfies you—I hadn't no doubt from the fust," quietly replied Old Business; but then his countenance suddenly changed.

A little to the right, just at the edge of the moist ground, he detected another trail. Springing forward he knelt down and closely scrutinized the tell-tale prints.

"What is it? what do ye make out?" muttered Pike, huskily, great drops of perspiration starting out upon his face.

"Somebody's bin here, no hafe a hour afore or ahind the lad. Three—no, thar's four. One wore moccasins—two bed on heavy boots—t'other hed—ge-thunder!"

Old Business stared like one in a dream for several moments, then hurriedly fumbled in his pockets, paying no attention to the anxious questions of Pike. From among a little bundle of similar ones, he produced a skin thong, half cut through in several places. This, which appeared to be a measure, of some sort, he carefully compared with a faintly outlined track in the moist earth. Then he arose, his face sternly set, his eyes fixed with a strange fire as he turned toward Pike.

"Thar's more deviltry afoot than I thought, old man. We've got two bits o' work out out fer us."

"What is it? Why don't ye speak out, d—?"

"I thought that Brand cuss was lyin' last night, but sure as you're a livin' sinner, his gal passed by hyar, with three men, not half an hour from Mark. We've got to find out what it means—"

"Mark first; what's the gal to us?"

"More'n you think, mebbe. But I reckon the two trails won't be fur apart. I don't know, but I feel it—somehow—tells me that this trail, or rather them what made it, is the cause o' Mark's fallin' us. But thar—come on."

In silence the two men followed the double trail. They were too anxious for idle speech. Along the valley they glided, Old Business picking up the trail with an ease and skill that was little short of marvelous. Then the valley widened, and became more open, with less undergrowth and boulders. Here and there grew small clumps of trees, and a soft carpet of grass made the work of trailing considerably easier.

"Looks like the lad was follerin' them," muttered Old Business, pointing out where Austin's footprints overlapped the others. "Ef he's sighted 'em, you kin 'pend on it, he's got into trouble a-tryin' to help the gal."

"Cuss her—!" angrily began Pike, when Old Business fiercely interrupted him.

"Shut up—don't you cuss her, think o' the child you hev lost; cusses come home to the one who speaks 'em."

Awed into silence by the storm he had invoked, Pike held his peace, though still muttering angrily beneath his breath.

"I knowed it! See thar—the trail goes into that pass," and Old Business paused at the mouth of a narrow, thickly-wooded defile. "The boy was trailin' the gal, as I guessed."

"It was difficult trailin', but the old hunter was equal to the task. Yard by yard he picked up the trail—then he paused, with a sharp cry, his eyes dilated, his face ghastly pale, as he pointed to a pool of blood upon the flinty ground. Around were traces of the stem of a stout bush bore fresh bullet-marks. There could be no doubt. A tragedy had taken place at that point. These significant signs, coupled with Austin's strange absence, told plainly that Mark had been the victim.

"My God!" gasped Pike. "This is the end!"

"No," was the harsh reply; "the only end for us is—VENGEANCE!"

CHAPTER XIX.

THE PHANTOM TRAIL.

FOR some time after leaving Dick's Pocket, Mark Austin kept his every sense upon the alert, and cunning indeed must have been the spy who could have dogged his footsteps without discovery. But then, as he saw nothing to awaken, or rather to keep alive his suspicions, and as the shades of night descended around him, he grew less cautious, and finally passed into the opposite extreme.

In truth he had much to think about; many things to occupy his mind. The past two weeks had been eventful ones. He had become curiously involved with two women, one of whom he believed he loved truly and sincerely, yet the other exercised a strange fascination over him, even now, since he had chosen between her love and hatred. Despite his stout nerves, a chill crept over him as he recalled her last words—"You have seen how powerfully I could love—you shall learn how intensely I can hate!"

Then came thoughts of the old man who had so queerly become associated with him and his partner. In vain did Mark endeavor to satisfy the vague suspicion that they had met before—that Old Business was not the entire stranger he would fain have them believe. In vain he racked his brain. Though feeling almost positive that they had met and known each other at some period of the past, he could not rend the misty veil that obscured his memory.

Then again would his thoughts revert to Edna Brand. He saw now what he could not bring himself to confess, on that delicious afternoon, spent beneath the redwood tree upon Swayback, that the fair maiden had built for herself a nest in his heart of hearts—that he loved her truly and earnestly. Well, the days would pass by rapidly enough, and on the coming Sabbath he was to meet her once more, beneath the redwood. And then—even in the darkness of night, Mark's cheek flushed and his eyes sparkled brightly—he would be brave, would soon know his fate for good or ill.

"Ef I what's that?" In an instant the young miner was himself again, and fully upon the alert as he crouched down beside a cedar shrub, clutching his rifle with a steady hand. Clear and distinct there had come to his ears the sound of a heavy footstep, a sound such as is made when one steps unexpectedly into a hollow, which, though the descent may be less than a dozen inches, a body even more than would a calculated leap of as many feet. Accompanying the sound was a half-stifled exclamation or curse; enough to put Mark fully upon the alert after the remarks of Old Business.

"Some one dogging me, sure enough!" he muttered, listening intently.

But he could hear nothing. The sound had broken so unexpectedly that he could not locate it, though, naturally enough, he reasoned, if he was being dogged the sound must have come from behind. Then, as he heard nothing further, he cautiously glided ahead, making as little noise as possible, listening keenly for further signs of his pursuers.

He passed over fully half a mile of ground without hearing anything to confirm his sus-

picious, and then, believing that he had succeeded in throwing the spies off his trail, he pressed forward with more rapidity, lest he should be late at the rendezvous.

His present course lay along a narrow, almost straight valley, comparatively free of undergrowth, though studded here and there with clumps of trees. The moon cast a clear light down the valley. Except when in the shadow cast by the trees, a person passing along this valley could be easily kept in view by a pursuer. After what had occurred, Mark hesitated about exposing himself so fully. Pausing beneath a bushy tree, he glanced keenly around. Not a sound came from the back trail. But as he gazed along the valley he gave a slight start and leaned eagerly forward.

Before him, several hundred yards distant, he could just make out several indistinct, phantom-like figures, gliding noiselessly along, steadily increasing the distance between them and their interested observer.

"They've missed me, and think I've hurried on," muttered Mark, with a grim chuckle. "Well, they're going my way, so I may as well turn the tables and play spy for the nonce."

Cautiously gliding out until he placed a clump of trees between him and the objects of his curiosity, Mark ran swiftly forward, almost upon tiptoe, so that his foot gave forth scarcely any echo. Twice he followed this plan, and then, peering forth from his covert, he saw the party standing just upon the edge of a little grove which grew at the mouth of a narrow pass or defile running at right angles with the valley.

"You kin take your choice," were the first words that met Mark's ears. "Either walk quietly, or else we'll hev to kerry you—an' that wouldn't be comf'table to nither on us."

"I'll walk—only tell me where you are taking me—What have I done to deserve this treatment?"

Mark started, and a little exclamation broke from his lips. He could scarcely believe his ears, and yet the voice was assuredly a woman's!

"That's none o' your business, n'r of mine, nuther," was the rude reply. "We've got to 'bey orders, an' you've got to 'bey us, or take the consequences, which mightn't be 'greeable. You've did bully so, fur—hev come 'long like a led sheep—so don't spile it all by gittin' rambunctious this time o' day. It can't do ye no good—you've got sense enough to see that. Ef you take to kickin' up an' gittin' over the traces, why, we'll jest put a gittin' in your purty mouth an' tote ye 'long on our shoulders."

"You have the power now, but the time will come when you and your vile employers—"

"Oh, cheess it!" impatiently interrupted another voice. "Come on—we've wasted too much time already."

The shadows moved on, and disappeared from view in the shadows that shrouded the mouth of the pass. And after a little hesitation, Mark Austin glided cautiously along upon their trail, little dreaming to what it was fated to lead him.

The gloom of night, doubly dense in that deep, narrow pass, shut down over the young miner. Eyesight was of little avail here; he must rather trust to the sense of touch. His feet cool branches brushed his face. His feet tripped over uneven projections in the trail. More than once he left the narrow path, and never knew it until he brought up against a tree-trunk or some huge boulder.

At such times he would pause and listen breathlessly, fearful lest the noise thus made had betrayed him to his phantom-friends in front. But all was still. Only the far-away sighing of the night wind among the trees and bushes growing high above him. Not a breath of air stirred the shrubs around him. Not a sound came from before him. Had the rough-speaking men become aware that they were followed, and were they even then lying in wait for him? Or were they, taking advantage of their better knowledge of the dark trail, steadily gaining upon him?—was he wasting his time to no good end?

Truly, the young miner was upon a phantom trail.

"I'll follow it until it's settled in one way or another," doggedly muttered Mark, as he once more resumed his blind progress, a hand upon his trusty revolver, ready for offense or defense, as the case might require.

On now with increased haste. Hearing nothing to guide him, Mark fell into that common error—so easily made; just when he should have displayed more caution he lessened it.

We have abet met with illustrations of this the other day. A number of plumbeated grouse had settled near the middle of a large field of corn stubble. The weather was cold, the wind high, and they were very wild. A lad was attempting to gain a shot at them. He lay flat upon his stomach, creeping along over the frozen snow, frequently pausing behind a corn-hill. But as he drew near the coveted game he lost his coolness. Only a few yards more and he would be within range of the huddling birds, whose long necks were already high in the air, their suspicious aroused. Interested in the sight, I found myself calling to the lad—

"Easy—easy, there!" But the mischief was done—the grouse sailed away like the wind, and the lad lost his shot.

A digression, very easy. Yet it so aptly applies to Mark's case that I hope for pardon. Like the young hunter, he displayed true skill in the first portion of his "stalk," but he, too, grew excited and impatient just when he stood more than ever in need of coolness and caution.

In his haste, now, he alarmed the game. They heard his blundering footsteps, and increased their own pace, hoping to gain a point from whence they could take an observation without risk to themselves.

Mark stumbled and fell over a stone. As he lay still and listened breathlessly, fearful lest he had alarmed the game, he heard the faint sound of footfalls beyond—a little exclamation—then all was still.

These sounds did not tell him much; only that his game was still afoot and not far in advance. He saw, too, that he had been foolishly incautious. When he arose, he glided on noiselessly as a phantom. But the harm was already wrought.

A few moments later and he caught sight of the group, just crossing a narrow belt of moonlight at a barren point in the defile. At that instant he saw the woman turn her head. The clear moonlight fell upon the pale, anxious face. A sharp cry broke from his lips as he leaped out into the open ground.

Like magic the group faded from view.

But then a dazzling glare lighted up the fringe of bushes. Mark staggered back, with a half-stifled cry. The hot hand of a giant seemed tearing at his heart. His brain seemed on fire. He saw a dark form leaping toward him with uplifted weapon. Mechanically he drew a revolver and fired. Then what

seemed a clap of thunder smote upon his brain. He fell heavily to the ground, the pistol dropping from his nerveless hand.

His appearance was that of a dead man; yet he felt more like a man in a dream. There was a vague, half-consciousness. He felt rough hands upon him. He heard, indistinctly, far-off, dreamy sounds, as of men talking. He knew that he was being borne along in some manner, through the defile, into another valley, over rough and intricate ground. He strove to speak, but in vain. And then insensibility seemed to steal over him.

The next he remembered was being rudely flung down upon the ground. He heard sounds as of men digging—of removing earth and stones. The horrible thought struck him—they were going to bury him—and he still living! Yet he was helpless. Another shock—a fall; then came a sense of suffocation, of horrible pain—all was a blank.

CHAPTER XX.

OLD BUSINESS CAPTURES A PRIZE.

"BRACE UP, man—don't play woman now," muttered Old Business, as he shook Pike by the shoulder. "Things looks bad just now, but who knows—it may cl'ar up all right, 'a'er all, ef we only think so."

"No—the hand of fate is in it," huskily muttered Pike, as he crouched down beside the tell-tale blotch of blood. "I loved him—that was enough. There is a curse upon me—a black curse that spares nothing—ever since that fearful night when I awoke and found my hands red with blood—my God! can I never forget—never run away from that horrible sight, that haunting spirit?"

With a cry—almost a yell of agonizing remorse, the miner groveled upon the ground like one in a fit. Old Business sprang back a pace, his rifle pointing toward the writhing figure, a strange look upon his face.

"Trailed home at last!"

The words dropped mechanically from his lips, and for a few moments he remained motionless, closely watching the miner, as though in doubt what course to pursue. But then, like one struck with a sudden recollection, he sprang forward and holding Pike firmly, poured a portion of whisky down his throat. The strong liquor acted as a restorative, or else the paroxysm had exhausted itself, for in a few moments "Lengthy" was sitting up and gazing around with a dazed look upon his haggard features.

"Thar—you're lookin' hearty once more," cried Old Business, in his usual tone of careless ease. "Blamed ef you didn't skeer me, though, fer a bit—thought you was gwine up the flume skeer enough!"

"I didn't—didn't talk foolish, did I?" "A little—you 'peared to think that the boy hed got rubbed out—that's all," was the quiet reply.

"I didn't know—sometimes critics that way talk a heap o' nonsense, which nobody'd orter pay 'tention to," and there was a wistful look in the hollow eyes, as though Pike longed, yet feared to confide in his comrade.

"You're gwine to be sick, old man, ef you don't take keer. Mebbe you'd better hunt out a hole whar you kin take it easy while I finish up this little job—"

"No—I loved Mark like a son, and I'll not desert him now. If he is—dead, then I'll avenge him—I'll spend the rest of my life—"

"Which would be last more'n three shakes, ef you don't mind," sharply interrupted Old Business, as his hand closed firmly upon Pike's arm. "Keep cool—you git another touch o' that sickness, an' I'll hev a funeral on my hands jest when I hain't got time to 'tend to it. Look here: you want to help the lad, ef he's tuck captive, or to avenge him, 'sposin' the wust has come to pass. Good enough! So do I. But you'll lose the fun of you don't keep cool. You can't stand two o' them fits in one day—the next one 'll kill you dead—"

a tumble-bug under a cartwheel, you hear me! Thar's why I say—keep cool."

"I know—you are right. But see—we are losing time. Come—let us go!"

"All right—go whar? Ef you want to be boss, jest light out, 'll foller?"

"After Mark—to free him, or avenge him!" Surely you are not going to hang back now—you, who called him your friend?" impatiently cried Pike.

"Easy, pard—you'll live the longer fer it," was the quiet reply. "I don't reckon you know me pritty well yet, when you talk o' my backin' out. That ain't my name—not much. I never quit a trail until I've seen both ends of it. I struck out 'long a blind trail, fifteen years ago, an' I'm on it yit. I struck another five years ago, an' one three years sence, an' hyar I be still on the trail, an' I leave 'em until I bag my game or kick the bucket myself. Thar's the kind o' hairpin I am!"

"I didn't mean no 'fense—but you don't know how bad this business has cut me up," said Pike, huskily.

"I feel it, too, more'n you give me credit fer, 'praps. But let that pass. We've lost time enough; now fer business. You jest squat down an' take it easy, while I read the sign 'round here. It's in jest sech jobs that a feller saves time in the end by makin' haste slowly."

Pike obeyed, partly because he could think of nothing better, though so impatient at what he fancied was a criminal delay, but more because he was far too weak to resist the will of his comrade. The severe fit had shaken him terribly.

"It's easy 'nough to read this lot o' sign, anyhow," said Old Business, as much to himself as for the benefit of Pike. "The boy hedn't patience 'nough fer to be a good trailer. He lost sight o' them he was shadowin', an' was afraid they'd give him the slip. 'Stead o' that he run up so clost that they hearn an' lay fer him. He stood here when they opened on 'im—thar's whar his heel scratched the rock as he lepped back. They was thar—the withered leaf yender was made so by the burnin' powder. They must 'a' shot more'n once, fer thar is whar one o' thar bullets blazed that tree. No—the lad wasn't killed outright—at least at fust. He burned powder afore he went under. 'Twas his bullet scarred the bush over yender. Thar's plain enough. The shot was fired from here, jest whar he stood. You kin see whar it glanced from the bush an' splattered the rock, yender."

In these and similar words did Old Business, as he carefully quartered the ground, explain the sign that met his keen eye. Pike listened with painful eagerness, chafing impatiently at what he deemed a useless delay.

Bending low, almost prostrated, Old Business crept slowly along the defile, his keen eyes overlooking nothing, reading a significant story in signs that would have escaped another's eye altogether.

"What is it—not his body?" faltered Pike, as a low whistle broke from the trailer's lips.

"Scarcely—not much! It's them stubs,"

and Old Business pointed to where several stout bushes had been cut, evidently within the past few hours. "You kin read what they say?"

"No—I'm too stupid to-day. You mustn't expect anything from me—my wits are wool-gathering."

"Lucky I'm in good trim, then. Well, them bresh was used to kerry the boy—either alive or dead—off on. All we've got to do now is to find out whar they tuck him, an' thar's by follerin' the trail. You keep behind me, an' use your eyes well as ye kin. 'Twouldn't be healthy fer us to run into camp'n in these parts, I don't reckon."

Old Business followed the trail at a steady pace, dropping occasional remarks as he progressed. In crossing a narrow patch of moist footprints, but found nothing in his little bundle of thoughts to match. At several points along the trail he indicated where the litter had rested for a few moments, in each case marked with blood.

Through the defile, out into a wide valley, where the trail was still more difficult to follow. Yet, with the unerring certainty of a bloodhound, the hunter was never once at fault, seemingly guided by more than human powers.

Along the valley for a couple of miles, then to the right through a defile with almost perpendicular walls. The country was even more diversified now than at first. The hills arose, rocky and forbidding, covered with a dark growth of cedar and stunted pines. Canons and ravines yawned upon every side.

And then—Old Business paused with a grunt of disgust. The trail, until now quite plain and distinct, was no longer to be seen, even by his sharp eyes. It ended all at once, a few yards from the base of a precipitous hill. The ground was hard and rocky, yet it seemed impossible for a human being to have left the spot without leaving some signs to indicate how.

"It's an ugly spot," muttered Pike, with a stealthy glance around them. "A superstitious man—"

"Mought 'speak to meet the devil here—jest so; but the devils in these parts are all human, I reckon. You can't faze me—ha! To kiver—quick!"

A long, sharp whistle rung out upon the still noon air, awaking the echoes among the hills with marvelous distinctness. To the startled trail-hunters it sounded from almost directly beside them, and with weapons ready for use, they sprang back to the nearest cover, a clump of cedars.

Again the signal sounded, and this time it was promptly answered, from some little distance. Their first and most natural fears set at rest, the comrades interchanged glances. The same thought had occurred to them both. Perhaps these persons signaling each other were the ones connected with the disappearance of Mark Austin. If so—

"Look yender!" hissed Old Business, as the figure of a man appeared upon the level ground beyond, and seated himself upon a boulder. "By—I it's that pesky varmint, Eli Brand!"

"Thar's another—a Greaser, from his looks," whispered Pike, as a lithe, dark-featured man came shambling down the opposite slope.

"Is this the way you keep guard?" angrily cried Eli Brand, as the other neared him. "I've been whistling here this last half-hour—"

"What the Mexican replied was lost to our friends, as nearly one hundred yards separated them from Brand and his comrade. Leaning against the rock, they conversed eagerly, as if seemed.

"I can't stan' this!" muttered Old Business, laying aside his rifle and tightening his belt. "I must hear what they're sayin'. Mebbe it's somethin' 'bout Mark. You keep ready, an' ef they smell me out too soon, jest plug the Greaser; I'll tend to Brand."

Prostrating himself, Old Business glided across to where a clump of bushes would conceal him from the two men, then stealthily advanced. But he was too late. The conference, whatever its subject might be, was over, and Brand abruptly turned and left the spot. Old Business gritted his teeth with rage, but there was no help for it.

The Mexican was still standing beside the boulder, absorbed in rolling up a cigarette. A bold resolve crossed the hunter's mind. If Eli Brand—ha! he was rapidly disappearing down the defile.

But just then the Mexican succeeded in igniting his cigar. His back was toward Old Business, twenty yards away. If Brand was only out of sight!

Then, desperate, Old Business arose and leaped forward with wondrous lightness, his sinewy fingers closing round the astounded Mexican's throat before he could give the alarm. A brief struggle—then the two men fell heavily to the ground, and a bright blade flashed before the eyes of the terrified captive.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 296.)

and seventeen. Beyond that, it had wrought little change in Judestown or its inhabitants. Master Rantey having displayed, during his rapid career at college, sundry "fast" tendencies, was sent to sea to take the nonsense out of him. That young gentleman bore his fate with most exemplary patience and resignation, affirming that he always had a strong partiality for bilge-water and short allowance, and rather liked the cat-o-nine-tails than otherwise.

Great was the delight of the worthy admiral, his uncle, when he heard of his nephew's destination; and it was partially through his influence that, some months after, Rantey, radiant in blue roundabout and bright brass buttons, stood on the deck of the Sea Nymph, and wrote his name in tremendous capitals, as "Randolph Lawless, U. S. N."

"Now remember, Minnie, you mustn't go and fall in love with anybody else," were his parting words; "if you do, I'll knock all creation into everlasting naught; I'll hurl the whole universe into the regions of space. I'll set fire to every blessed one of the United States, and bring all the world and Nebraska Territory to universal ruin!"

Duly impressed by these appalling and blood-chilling threats, Erminie dutifully promised not to "go and fall in love with anybody else;" and Mr. Lawless, transformed into a dashing midshipman, gave his friends at home his blessing, and set off on his first voyage.

Ray, who, even in his boyhood, had displayed great talent in legal matters, was now, by the kindness of the admiral, in New York city, studying law.

Erminie, too, was absent from home now. Having completely captivated the heart of the generous and eccentric Admiral Havelin, as she did that of most others, he set about thinking, one day, what was the best means to display his affection. Just then he recollected her fondness for learning, and the few opportunities she had to indulge that fondness; and jumping up, he struck the table a vigorous blow, exclaiming:

"I'll send her to school. Pet learns all them heathenish foreign languages, and makes a noise on that big sea-shell of a piano, and so shall little Snowdrop. I'll send her to school this very day—shiver my timbers if I don't!"

And on the spur of the moment, the admiral, with many a doleful grunt, dumped himself on old Kingbone's back, and joggled over the head to the cottage.

There he made his proposal to Erminie, whose sweet blue eyes lit up at first with joy and gratitude; then came the thought of Keturah, now a helpless cripple, unable to leave her room, and her countenance fell, and the joyful light faded from her face.

"I am very sorry, but I cannot leave my grandmother," was her sad reply.

"Fiddle-de-dee!" exclaimed the admiral, testily. "She's got Lucy to attend to her; and if Lucy is not enough, she can have half a dozen female women from the White Squall to keep her in proper sailing order. I know a good place to send you to, Snowdrop, and go you shall, and that's all about it! I'll speak to the old lady myself about it."

So the admiral stamped up-stairs and spoke to Keturah, accordingly, who gave a cold, curt assent. And the result of this was that, three weeks after, Erminie was sent to a Convent of the Sacred Heart, to study everything necessary for a finished education.

So, of our four young friends, only Firefly remained at home, under the surveillance of a tutor. Pet had none of her mischief-loving propensities as she grew up; in fact, they seemed to grow with her growth, until she became the maddest, merriest, skip-over-the-moon madcap that ever threw a peaceable community into convulsions. Never did a pupil drive a well-disposed teacher to the verge of distraction as Pet did hers; never did a naughty daughter throw a dignified "parent" into such undignified paroxysms of rage as our Firefly did; never was a quiet, orderly, stately mansion thrown upside down, as if a tornado had torn through it every day, as Heath Hall was; never in any other house was there heard such awful banging of doors, and slamming down of windows, and tearing like a maniac up and down stairs, and rushing like a living whirlwind in and out of every room in five minutes, as might be seen and heard here; never were servants so completely at their wits' end; never were quiet, business-like neighbors so completely and utterly shocked and astonished before as they were by the freaks of Judge Lawless' heiress.

Well-named was Pet; for never, since the plagues of Egypt, was the earth afflicted with a more lawless little hurricane than the hot-headed, laughter-loving, mischief-making heiress in question. Very charming, withal, and bewilderingly beautiful was Pet; and there was not a young man in Judestown, or within twenty miles round, who would not have given his whiskers and mustaches, for one glance from her "bonnie black o's." But Pet didn't care a snap for all the young men in America, except, perhaps, Ray Germaine; and she shirked away unmercifully, turned countless heads, and had more sighing swains at her feet than all the other belles of Judestown put together.

Pet was naturally clever, bright, and talented, and could have progressed wonderfully in her studies if she had chosen; but she didn't choose, and followed her own sweet will about learning, in spite of all the lectures, entreaties and persuasions of her tutor, and the stern reproaches and angry outbursts of her father. Therefore, at eighteen, she could play a little, draw a little—her talents in this respect were chiefly confined to caricature—sing a good deal, talk more than she could sing, and was still aware that English grammar was a little book with a gray cover. At first, Mr. Garnet, her teacher, had insisted upon her applying herself; but seeing that Pet only listened very dutifully and then did as she liked after, he gave it up, and allowed her now pretty much to do as she liked.

Pet had from the first conceived a strong dislike to this gentleman—a dislike that increased every day. This was the more surprising, as his conduct, manners, and manners, were irreproachable, and he was an immense favorite with the judge and everybody else. In person he was a tall, light-haired, gray-eyed, effeminate-looking young man; easy and courteous in manner, polished in address, a finished scholar, and—strict Christian. But Pet's keen gaze had detected the concealed cunning in the eye; the sardonic smile, the unscrupulous look the face sometimes wore; the hard, crafty, cruel expression of the mouth. Therefore, all his virtue was to her hypocrisy; his goodness, a mask for evil designs; his politeness, a cloak for covert wickedness. Pet disliked him, and took no pains to conceal it.

And Pet had read his character aright; he had been a young man of fortune—he was a ruined debauchee, reduced to this by his excesses. At first, he had looked upon his scholar as a pest and plague; but as she grew up, his feelings changed. Love and ambition

began to enter his heart. What, he thought, if he could win this peerless beauty, this wealthy heiress, to be his wife? His fallen fortunes would be retrieved, and his pride and passion gratified by possessing her. Concealing his schemes, he would himself round the heart of the judge, until he became his bosom friend and confidant. He knew Pet disliked him, but he thought this was because she looked upon him as a cross master; if she could be taught to regard him as a lover, it would be very different. Therefore, as months passed, he became all kindness, tenderness, and affability—the most devoted slave and admirer Miss Lawless had.

"When Satan turns saint, there's room for suspicion!" said Pet, looking at him with a cool, critical eye. "You're up to something you shouldn't be, my good youth. I'll keep my eye on you, Mr. Rozzel Garnet."

But though Pet kept her "eye on him" as she threatened, no clue to the change could be discovered; for as a lover she had never dreamed of him in her wildest moments. Until one day, bursting into the library where he sat, with an open letter in her hand, her cheeks flushed to a deeper crimson than usual, her dancing curls all irradiate, her brilliant eyes flashing back the sunshine, her whole face sparkling with delight, she looked up from the book he was reading, and asked:

"You seem in unusually good spirits to-day, Miss Lawless—may I ask the cause?"

"Yes; I've got a letter from Ray, and he's coming home in a month or so. Tra, la, la, la, la, la, la, la."

And Pet went waltzing round the room. A cloud settled for a moment on the bland face of the gentleman, and his small eyes shot a sharp, jealous gleam at the bewildering figure floating dimly over the carpet. It vanished, however, as quickly as it came, as he said, in a tone of assumed carelessness: "Ah! And who is Ray, Miss Petronilla?"

"Why, you know well enough," said Pet, impatiently. "Ray Germaine—you saw him when he was here last."

"Bless me! Yes, I had forgotten; but you remember that was three years ago, Miss Lawless, so I may be pardoned for not recollecting him. If I took as much interest in him as you seem to do, my memory would doubtless be better."

His tones were low, bland and oily, but his gleaming eyes were like two drawn stilettoes. "I expect you would," said Pet. "I have a faint idea that I would have some trouble, if not more—in forgetting Ray Germaine. Don't believe he would approve of my doing so at all, either."

"I did not think Miss Lawless cared for the approval or disapproval of any one in the world," insisted the gentleman, with one of his bland smiles and needlelike glances.

"We'll see what thought does! That proves, Mr. Garnet," said the elf, mockingly, "how careful the general run of mankind should be in trusting their thoughts, since even a gentleman so near perfection as you are can be deceived."

"Then you do care for the approval of this fellow, Germaine?" said the tutor, trying to hide a dark scowl.

"This fellow, Germaine? Well, there's a nice way for a young lady's tutor to talk of her friends. I'd prefer to hear him called Mister Tremaine, sir, if it's all the same to you," said Pet, drawing herself up.

"Oh, very well!" said Garnet, with a curling lip; "only as he is a pauper, educated by the bounty of your uncle—"

But his speech was cut short by Pet's springing suddenly round, with blazing eyes, passioned darkened face, and fiercely and passionately bursting out with:

"It is false! It is a foul slander! Ray Germaine is no pauper; and if you ever dare to say such a thing again, I shall have you turned out of the house! Take care how you talk, Mr. Rozzel Garnet! It's treading on dangerous ground to slight my friends before me!"

Mr. Garnet saw that he had made a false move, and that it was dangerous work handling this fiery little grenade, so he banished all traces of his recent scowl from his face, and his tones were of honeyed sweetness when he spoke again.

"Ten thousand pardons, Miss Lawless, for my offense. Believe me, I had the remotest intention of alighting your excellent friend, Mr. Germaine. You and he were very intimate, I presume?"

"Thick as pickpockets," said Pet, forgetting her momentary anger. "Heigho! I wish he was here; he was the only masculine I ever knew, who wasn't as stupid as an owl."

"That's a very flattering speech, Miss Lawless," said Garnet, biting his lip, "and a very sweeping assertion. Are there no exceptions but him?"

"Not that I've ever met. I dare say there may be one or two in the world; but I haven't come across them."

There was a moment's pause, during which Garnet sat gnawing his nether lip, and Pet fitted round the room, humming an opera air. He watched her covertly, and then, seeing her about to leave, he started impulsively up, exclaiming:

"One moment, Miss Pet—I have something to say to you."

"Well, fire away," said Pet, composedly, turning round, and standing with her back to the door.

But for once in his life, his customary assurance seemed to have failed him. There was something in the bold, fearless open gaze of those brilliant black eyes that daunted him, brazen as he was. A slight crimson flushed to his face, and his eyes for an instant fell.

"Now, what in the name of Diana and all her nymphs is coming?" mentally exclaimed Pet, as she watched in surprise his embarrassment.

"The cool, self-possessed, dignified Mr. Rozzel Garnet blushing like a boiled lobster before poor little Pet Lawless! Snakes and serpents, and varmints generally, the world's coming to an end—that's certain!"

Then aloud:

"Mr. Garnet, I desired you to fire away, which translated from the original Greek means go ahead, and say whatever you want to. No need to be bashful about it, seeing it's only me."

The flush on Mr. Garnet's cheek deepened, as he said:

"Perhaps, Miss Petronilla, what I am about to say may be unexpected, but it can hardly take you by surprise. The change in my manner toward you for the last few months must have prepared you for it."

chase to fighting a duel, and I'm yours to command."

"Miss Lawless, may I beg of you to be serious for a few moments—this is no jesting matter," said the gentleman, looking annoyed.

"Well, my goodness! ain't I serious? I'll leave it to the company, generally, if I'm not as solemn as a hearse. If you'd only condescend to look at me instead of watching the flowers in the carpet, you would see my face is half a yard long."

"Then, Miss Lawless, to come to the matter at once—for I know you do not like long prefaces—I love you, I worship you, Petronilla! Petronilla, dearer than life! may I hope one day to possess this dear hand?"

Now, if our Pet had been sentimental, she would have blushed becomingly, burst into tears, or covered her face with her hands, maybe; but Pet wasn't a bit sentimental, and so, arching her eyebrows, and opening her eyes till they were the size of two saucers, she gave utterance to her complete amazement in a long, shrill whistle.

Garnet approached her, and would have taken her hand, only as they were still stuck in her apron-pockets, she didn't appear to have such a notion about her. Accordingly, therefore, he attempted to do the next best thing, that is, put his arms around her waist; but Pet very coolly edged away, saying:

"Hands off, Mr. Garnet, until better acquainted. I don't believe in having coatsleeves round my waist—as a general thing. Just say that over again, will you; it was mighty interesting!"

And Pet flung herself into an arm-chair, and put her feet up on an ottoman with a great display of carelessness and ankles, and stared Mr. Garnet composedly in the face.

"Cruel girl! You know your power, and thus you use it. Oh, Petronilla! my beautiful one! have I nothing left to hope for?"

"That's a question I can't take it upon myself to answer," said Pet. "There's your next quarter's salary, though, you can hope for that."

"Is that meant as a taunt? Oh, Petronilla! you little know how deeply, how devotedly I love you! I could give my life to make you happy."

"Thanky, Mr. Garnet—shows a highly Christian spirit in you; but, at the same time, I guess I won't mind it. As to your loving me, I have not the slightest doubt about it. I'm such an angel in shemule form that I don't see how people can help loving me, any more than they can help the toothache. So you needn't go telling me over again you love me, because you've said it two or three times already; and the most interesting things get tiresome, you know, when repeated too often."

"Capricious, beautiful fairy! how shall I win you to seriousness? Fairest Petronilla, I would serve for this little hand even as Jacob served for Rachel!"

"Mr. Garnet, it's real polite of you to say so, but you'll excuse me for saying I'd a good deal rather you wouldn't. You've been here six years now, and if I thought I was to undergo six more like them, I'd take the first bar of soft-soap I could find and put an immediate end to my melancholy existence."

"Mocking still! Oh, beautiful Petronilla! how shall I reach this willful heart?"

"There's no heart there, Mr. Garnet; it took a trip to the fast city of Gotham three years ago, and hasn't come back since."

"With Raymond Germaine?" he said, with a sharp flash of his eyes.

"Exactly; you've struck the right thing in the middle—hit the nail straight on the head—jumped, with your accustomed sagacity, at my exact meaning. After all, you're not half so stupid as you look, Mr. Garnet."

"Miss Lawless," he broke out, angrily, "this levity is as unbecoming as it is unnecessary. I have asked you a question, which, as a lady, you are bound to answer."

"Mr. Garnet, look here," said Pet; "did papa hire you to knock reading, writing and spelling into me, or to make love?"

"Miss Lawless!"

"Perhaps, though," said Pet, in a musing tone, "it's customary with tutors, when winding up a young lady's education, to put her through a severe course of love-making, that she may know how to act and speak properly when occasion requires. Mr. Garnet, excuse me, I never thought of it before; I see it all now. Just begin at the beginning again, if it's not too much trouble, and you'll see how beautifully I'll go through with it."

He started up, passionately, and bit his lip till it bled.

"Once for all, Miss Lawless," he exclaimed, stifling his impotent rage, and striding fiercely up to her—"once for all, I demand an answer. I love you—will you be my wife?"

"Well, upon my word, Mr. Rozzel Garnet," said Pet, confusedly, "you have the mildest and pleasantest way of your own I ever witnessed. Here you come stamping up to me as if about to knock me down, and savagely tell me you love me! Love away, can't you, but don't get in a rage about it! I'm sure you're perfectly welcome to love me till you're black in the face, if you'll only take things easy."

"Miss Lawless, forgive me; I'm half-mad, and scarce knew what I said."

"I forgive you," said Pet, stretching out her hands as if about to warm them. "Go, sin no more. I thought you were a little light in the head myself; but then it didn't surprise me, as it's about the full of the moon, I think."

"Miss Lawless, I did think you were too much of a lady to despise and scoff at true affection thus. If I have the misfortune to be poor, that does not make me the less sensitive to insult."

"Now, Mr. Garnet, look here," said Pet, rising; "I'm getting tired of this scene, and you may well bring it to an end at once. Your love I fully understand; you have several reasons for loving me—several thousands, in fact, but we won't speak of them. As to insulting you, I flatly deny it; and if you think I fight a duel about it to-morrow."

"I fight a duel about it to-morrow. I'm not in the habit of doing, neither in despising people for being poor; you know both these things as well as I do. But, Mr. Garnet, I wouldn't marry you if you were the last man in the world, and I was to go to my grave a forlorn, hatchet-faced old maid for refusing you. If it's any consolation to you to know it, I wouldn't marry you to save your neck from the hangman—your soul from you know who—or your goods and chattels, personal, from being turned, neck and crop, into the street. Now, there?"

His face blanched with rage; his eyes gleamed with a serpent-like light; his thin lips quivered, and for a moment he stood glaring upon her as if he could have torn her limb from limb. But there was a dangerous light in her eyes, too, as she stood drawn up to her full height, with reddening cheeks, and defiant, steady gaze, staring him still straight in the face. So they stood for an instant, and then the sense of the ludicrous overcame all else in Pet's mind, and she burst into a clear, merry peal of laughter.

"Well, upon my word, Mr. Garnet, if this is not as good as a farce; here we are, staring at each other, as if for a wager, and looking as savage as a couple of uncivilized tigers. I dare say, it would be a very 'nice' way to pass time on an ordinary occasion; but as it's drawing near dinner-time, and I have a powerful appetite of my own, you'll excuse me for bidding you a heartrending adieu, and tearing myself away. If you have anything more to say, I'll come back after dinner, and stand it like a martyr."

"Not so fast, Miss Petronilla Lawless!" said Garnet, grasping her by the arm, his sallow face fairly livid with rage; "since it has been your good pleasure to laugh me to scorn, and mock at the affection I have offered, just hear me. I swear to you, the day shall come when you will rue this! There is but a step between love and hatred, and that step I have taken. Remember, you have made me your deadliest enemy, and I am an enemy not to be scorned! Girl, beware!"

"Well, now, I declare," said Pet, "if this is not as good as a play and moral. I'm afraid you're only plagiarizing, though, Mr. Garnet, for that melodramatic 'girl, beware!' sounds very like something I read in the 'Pink Bandit of the Cranberry Cove.' Confess, now, you've been reading it—haven't you—and that's an extract from it; and, at the same time, you'll oblige me by letting go my arm. It's not made of cast iron, though you seem to think it is."

"Laugh, girl!" he said, hoarsely. "but the day will come when you shall sue to me, and sue in vain, even as I have done to-day. Then you will know what it is to despise Rozzel Garnet."

"Why, you horrid old fright!" exclaimed Pet, with flashing eyes; "I sue to you, indeed! I guess not, my good teacher! How dare you threaten me, sir, your master's daughter! Upon my word and honor, Mr. Rozzel Garnet, I have the best mind ever was to have you horsewhipped out of the house by my servants. A pretty chivalrous gentleman you are, to stand up there and talk to a lady like this! I declare to goodness! if I hadn't the temper of an angel, I wouldn't stand it!"

Still he held her, glaring in her face with his threatening eyes, and half-choked with passion.

"Let me go," said Pet, jerking herself first one way, and then another, to free herself from his tenacious grasp. "I vow I'll go and tell papa every blessed word of this, and if you stay another night under the same roof with me, my name's not Petronilla. Take your claw from my arm, will you? and let me go!"

Pet jerked and pulled in vain; Mr. Garnet held her fast, and smiled a grim, sardonic smile at her futile efforts.

"Spit and snarl, my little kitten," he said mockingly; "see what a sparrow you are in my grasp. Go you shall not, till it is my good pleasure to release you!"

With a sharp, passionate cry of rage, Petronilla darted down like lightning, and sunk her sharp, white teeth into his hand. The red blood spouted from a little circle of wounds, and with an oath of pain and fury, he sprung back from the little wild-cat. No sooner was his hold released, than Pet darted like a flash through the door, turned the key in the lock, and held him captive.

"Aha! Mr. Garnet!" she cried, exultingly; "little kittens can bite as well as snarl, you see. You caught a Tartar that time—didn't you? You're a model gentleman; you're the saint that ought to be canonized on the spot; you're the refined scholar—ain't you? I'll leave you, now, to discover the charms of solitude, while I go and tell papa the lesson I have taught you this morning. A little fasting and solitary imprisonment won't hurt your blood in the least, Bon jour, Seigneur Don Monseigneur Monseigneur! What a grand! May your guardian-angel watch over you till I come back, and keep you from bursting a blood-vessel in your rage. If anything should happen to so precious an individual, society might as well shut up shop at once, so the gods have a care of you, Mr. Rozzel Garnet! And off danced Pet."

In the dining-room she found her father awaiting her.

"Where is Mr. Garnet?" he asked as she entered.

"Mr. Garnet will not be down to dinner," said Pet, inwardly determining to keep that gentleman as long imprisoned as she could.

The judge, without troubling himself to inquire further, took his seat, and proceeded to administer condign punishment to the good things spread before him, assisted by Pet, whose appetite was by no means impaired by the pleasant scene she had just passed through, and whose stony conscience was not in the least troubled with remorse for having looked at a young gentleman up without his dinner.

About ten minutes after, the judge started to leave the room, and Pet, guessing where he was going, called to him:

"Papa!"

"Well," said the judge, pausing, and turning round.

"Where are you going?"

"To the library, Miss Lawless," said the judge, with dignity.

"Well, look here, papa, there's a prisoner of war in there."

"What, Miss Lawless?" said the judge, knitting his brows in perplexity.

"A prisoner I have taken—captivated—looked up! In other words, the pupil has turned teacher and locked her master up, as mothers do refractory children; to bring him to his senses."

"Miss Lawless," said the judge, in his most stately manner; "I have no time to listen to your nonsense. If you have anything to say—say it. If not, hold your tongue, and learn to be respectful when you address your father."

"Well, I never!" ejaculated Pet. "No matter how seriously, sensibly, or solemnly I talk, people say I'm talking nonsense. But that's just my fate; everything awful and horrid is destined to happen to me; and if I say a word against it, I'm told I'm imprudent and ungrateful, and dear knows what. Now, I told you I have locked my teacher up, and you tell me you have no time to listen to my nonsense. I guess Mr. Garnet finds it an unpleasant truth, anyway."

"Petronilla! what do you mean?" said her father, beginning to think there might be method in this madness.

"Why, that I've locked Mr. Garnet up in the library for not behaving himself," said Pet, promptly.

"Locked him up!"

"Yes, sir; and served him right, too, the hateful old ghoul!"

"Locked your teacher up?"

"Yes, sir; teachers require locking up as well as pupils."

"Miss Lawless, it's not possible that you have been guilty of such an outrageous act!" said the judge, with an awful frown.

"Yes, it is possible," said Pet; "and he deserves twice as much for what he did. Oh, wouldn't I like to be a man for one blessed half-hour, that I could horsewhip him within an inch of his life!"

"Good Heavens! what a visitation this mad girl is! What has Mr. Garnet done, you dreadful girl?"

"Dreadful girl!" burst out Pet, indignantly, "there's the way I'm abused for taking my own part. Your daughter's teacher has been making all sorts of love to me all the whole blessed morning!" and thereupon Pet commenced with a "full, true, and authentic" account of her morning interview in the library.

As the judge listened, the scowl on his brow grew blacker and blacker till his face was like the double-refined essence of a thunderbolt. But when Pet mentioned his threats and indignity in refusing to free her, his rage burst all bounds, and his wrath was a sight to see.

"The villain! the scoundrel! the blackleg! the low-bred bounder! to dare to talk to my daughter in such a way! I vow to Heaven I have a good mind to break every bone in his body! To insult my daughter under her father's roof, and threaten her like this! Petronilla, where is the key? I'll kick the impudent puppy out of the house."

"The key's in the door," said Pet. "I expect he's in a sweet frame of mind by this time." Up stairs, in a highly choleric state, marched the judge, and turning the key in the library-door, he confronted Mr. Garnet, who was striding up and down the room in a way not particularly beneficial to the carpet, with flashing eyes, scowling brows, and an awful expression of countenance generally, and began, in a tone of withering sarcasm:

"So, Mr. Garnet, you have done my daughter the honor to propose for her hand this morning, and when that digit was refused you, you caught her, and had the impudence to insult her in her father's house. Oh! you're a model teacher of youth, Mr. Garnet! You're an exemplary young man to be trusted with the education of a young female. Come, sir, out of my house, and if ever I catch sight of you again, I'll cane you while I'm able to stand. Off with you this instant." And the judge, who was as strong as half a dozen broken-down rouses like Garnet, caught him by the collar and unceremoniously dragged him down stairs. In vain the quondam teacher strove to free himself, and make his voice heard; not a word would the judge listen to; but upon reaching the hall door, landed him by a well-applied kick on the broad of his back, and then went in, slamming the door in his face.

Crestfallen and mortified, Mr. Garnet picked himself up, and glancing hurriedly around, beheld Petronilla standing laughingly watching him at the window. A very fiend seemed to leap into his eyes then, and shaking his fist fiercely at her, he strode off, breathing words of vengeance, "not loud, but deep."

(To be continued—commenced in No. 290.)

Popping the Question.

In olden times it was the fashion for a suitor to go down on his knees to a lady when he asked her to become his wife, which, with very stout gentlemen, was an uncomfortable proceeding.

The way in which Daniel Webster proposed to Miss Fletcher, was more modern, being at the same time neat and poetic. Like many other lovers, he was caught holding a skein of thread or wool, which the lady had been unravelling.

"Grace," said he, "we have been untying knots. Let us see if we can tie one which will not untie in a lifetime."

With a piece of tape he fashioned her a true lover's knot. Miss Fletcher perfected it, and a kiss put the seal to the symbolical bargain.

Most men when they "pop" by writing are more straightforward and matter-of-fact.

Richard Steele wrote to the lady of his heart; "Dear Mrs. Scrolock (there was no miss in those days), I am tired of calling you by that name, therefore, say a day when you will take that of madam. Your most devoted, humble servant, Richard Steele."

She fixed the day accordingly, and Steele's name instead of her heart to the suitor.

The celebrated preacher, Whitfield, proposed marriage to a young lady, in a very cool manner—as though Whitfield meant a field of ice. He addressed a letter to her parents without consulting the maiden, in which he said that they need not be afraid of offending him by a refusal, as he thanked God, he was quite free from the passion called love. Of course the lady did not conclude that this field, however white, was the field for her.

The brothers Jacob and William Grimm, whose fairy stories are doubtless known to most of our readers, were exceedingly attached to each other, and had no desire to be married. But it was thought proper by their friends that one of them should become a husband, and Jacob being the elder, it was agreed that he should be the one to enter matrimony. A suitable lady was found, but Jacob declined to do the courting, requesting William to act as his agent. William consented, but soon found that he was in love, and wanted the lady for himself. He could not think, however, of depriving his brother of such a treasure, and knew not how to act. An aunt kindly relieved him in his difficulty, by telling Jacob, who willingly resigned the damsel to his brother, and went out of the way till she had been made Mrs. William Grimm.

A Scotch headle was the one who popped the question in the grimmest manner. He took his sweetheart into the graveyard, and, showing her a dark corner, said, "Mary, my folks lie there. Would you like to lie there, Mary?" Mary was a sensible lassie, and expressed her willingness to obtain the right to be buried near the headle's relations by uniting herself to him in wedlock.

A similar un

NOT THE PIPE OF PEACE.

BY JOE JOY, JR.

My name is O'Dod,
And it is slightly odd
A fine-looking man for to carry the hod!
And what would they say
In old Erin, away,
To hear that at last I'd come down to such play?

If your honor, the court,
To hear my report,
Will lend me its ears and not cut me short,
I will tell you quite clear
How I came to be here,
Where I never expected at all to appear.

You see that McCarty,
He gave us a party
And sent round the invites to come and dance
heartily;
And to cheer up the scene
He had lots of potheen—
And McCarty he never does anything mean!

It hardly seemed real!
How the fiddle did squeal
When O'Murphy led off with an old Irish reel!
And with our brogues
Right in did we prance
With our arms round our girls and our feet in
the dance.

Such a racket, me lord,
Ye never have heard—
Like a hod-full of bricks dropping down from
the third;
And, hilloo! hilloo!
How we circled and flew
Till ye'd swear by your hat 'twas an old Irish
steve.

The ladies smiled sweet,
And the lads looked so neat,
But woe to the corns that got under our feet!
And, lippy-hop!
We didn't once stop
But to pull off our coats and to take a wee drop.

When, all of a once,
That lad of a dunce,
Mickey O'Bryan, up ag'inst me he runs,
And he gives to the pipe
Such a terrible swipe,
That it wind down me throat like a section of
trip.

And, yer honor, I just
Couldn't stop to resist;
To chuckle him under the chin wid my fist,
And, Kory O'More!
He roared it so sore;
Six feet of the lad laid along on the floor.

Now this rowdy-dow
Was a sign for a row,
And I wished myself out, and I didn't care how,
And each lad dropped his girl
In the midst of the whirr,
And I wouldn't have been there again for the
wor!

The ladies they shrieked,
And fainting they swooned;
And the rumpus began and it couldn't be check-
ed,
And the racket and roar!
Any one would have sworn
To more chairs in the air than there was on the
floor.

Such a rip and a tear!
I'm willing to swear
You'd enjoyed it, judge, if you had been there,
O'Murphy's old fiddle
Was smashed in the middle,
And he furl'd the tune for the fuss wid a
griddle.

The noses all mashed,
And the heads that crashed
Was hardly a fig to the bottles what smashed;
And the faces red,
Wid the noses that bled,
Was hardly a drop to the whisky shed.

So that beautiful ball
Wouldn't Linerick all
And a dozen police came around at a call;
They quickly out short
The fun of our sport,
And each took a partner and waited him to
court.

An Hour's Masquerade.

BY MARY REED CROWELL.

"I do declare, Frank, you are perfectly incorrigible! Here I have gone to no end of trouble for your sake, even succeeded in making Miss Gresham promise to send me her picture for your special benefit, and you deliberately announce your intention of going away when she comes!"

Frank's sister hardly knew whether to be most provoked or sorry; and she bestowed on her handsome, graceless brother a look so reproachful that he laughed delightedly.

"Upon my word, Lou, but was there ever such a scheming little woman as yourself? Do tell a fellow if Mr. Fred Merwyn walked unawares into any matrimonial trap you set for him!"

Mrs. Fred Merwyn frowned violently.

"Aren't you ashamed of yourself, Frank Halsey! You don't deserve that I should have taken such pains with Maud Gresham, for you, I half wish I had told her what a cross, unappreciative, disagreeable fellow you were, instead of—"

Frank's eyes twinkled.

"Oh, then you have been merely telling the unvarnished truth about me! Handsome, talented, angelic in disposition, faultless in behavior—and, dying to know the beautiful Miss Gresham!"

Mrs. Lou looked bewilderedly at him, his mischievous eyes belying the perfect honesty of tone; then she sighed lugubriously.

"Well, all I can say is, you are the most unappreciative brother I ever saw. Another time, I will not look out for you, when there is an heiress at stake!"

She gathered up her sewing as if to leave him, actually affronted; but Frank caught her skirt as she passed the sofa where he was lounging, so lazy, so handsome, so mischievously demure.

"Don't go off that way, sis. Come, tell me all about Miss Gresham. Is she really beautiful? I am interested, you see, after all."

Mrs. Merwyn halted beside the sofa, her aggrieved expression of countenance fading as Frank asked the tempting question.

"Beautiful! I never saw such a beautiful girl, Frank! Her hair is the loveliest shade of blonde-yellow."

"Regular spun gold, eh, Louie?"

"Exactly—and all full of delicious little ripples, that are so becoming!"

Frank crossed his hands comfortably under his handsome head.

"I always liked rippling hair—although I presume it is generally the result of Ivin's crimping-pins, or something like 'em. Go on, Lou. Complexion?"

Mrs. Merwyn was too enthusiastic to take notice of any latent sarcasm in Frank's attention.

"Such a skin! You've raved about milk and roses, and rubies and pearls, but you wait till you see Maud Gresham's complexion!"

Frank looked solemnly at the ceiling.

"I haven't a doubt of it, Lou! Wine dashed on snow, you know—producing exactly the combination of pearl rouge and carmine! Only, of course, Miss Gresham's charms are real."

Lou looked up, indignantly.

"Of course they are! Now, Frank Halsey, if you've been making fun of me all this time, I'll—"

Frank sprang from the sofa.

"Don't threaten, Lou! I'll go down town, and have a meditative smoke on what you've said. By-by, Lou!"

Mrs. Merwyn gave a little disappointed sigh.

"I never saw such a fellow! Well—when he sees Maud's photograph—"

And she smiled triumphantly, as she foresaw the surrender of her incorrigible brother's forces before the beauty of the girl she hoped to win for his wife.

"Hello, Fenn! you look as if there hadn't been a customer for a week! Are you especially busy this minute?"

Frank Halsey's clear, cheery voice sounded through the elegant little picture-gallery, over whose entrance was the sign, "Harold Fenn, Photographic Artist."

Mr. Fenn arose, pushing back some papers, as Halsey spoke.

"You're a godsend, Frank! I've been waiting for an hour for that rascally boy of mine to come, so I could run down to the bank, and over to Broadway, on an important errand. You'll 'tend shop' an hour, won't you?"

Frank shook his head, deprecatingly.

"It seems to me, you'd better wait till that boy comes. I can't take pictures, you know."

"No more you can, old fellow. Not in there any need of such artistic skill on your part. In the first place, there hasn't been a soul in for a couple of days, from which I argue no one will be here the next hour. Again—if any one comes keep 'em until I come back—at twelve exactly. I can trust you, Frank!"

And Fenn bolted, leaving Frank master of the situation, which, by the time half an hour had passed, he concluded was quite a secure, little supposing every occurrence of that hour was fate ordained. He had just half smoked a cigar, when the silvery-throated little bell on the door announced the entrance of some one.

"Hello! Fenn's back sooner than I expected."

Never for a moment thinking the alarm was from a customer, Frank went on smoking, composedly, until a vigorous pounding on the counter suddenly suggested the possible condition of the case.

He flung away his cigar and went into the reception room to see two pretty young ladies awaiting.

"We've been knocking here this half-hour, young man. Where's Mr. Fenn?"

Frank was somewhat startled by the sudden address of one of the girls—a handsome, dressed, stylish young lady, of undoubted independence of character.

He bowed—a little awkwardly, at the new position in which he found himself.

"Mr. Fenn is not in, ladies. If I can be of any service—"

He regretted the meaningless politeness the moment he said it.

"Can you take my photograph? I want it right away."

Frank colored slightly at the imperiousness of tone.

"Perhaps you had better wait a few moments until Mr. Fenn returns. The waiting-room is yonder—you may desire to arrange your toilet somewhat."

A half-whispered consultation took place between the ladies; then the chief spokeswoman looked inquiringly at Frank.

"You're the assistant, aren't you? You know all about colors and shadows, don't you?"

Frank bowed assent, reserving the fact that he was the assistant *pro tem* only.

"All right," the girl went on, half laughingly. "Then just tell me if this dress will take well, will you? I want my photograph for a young gentleman, and of course I want to look my best."

Frank smiled, and, echoed "of course," and assured her that black always took admirably, and delicately repeated his suggestion of retreating to the ladies' toilet-room, where they would find every convenience for any possible alteration of hair, dress, etc.

"Yes; come on, Jennie. You'll let us know, young man, when Mr. Fenn returns, will you?"

The "young man" assured her he would, and took refuge in the back office, divided only by a partition that did not extend to the ceiling from the dressing-room, in which the patrons of the gallery arranged their refractory coiffures, and rearranged a stubborn tie or bow.

"Jennie, take off your gloves, there's a dear. My hair is every which way, and I've got to take off both switches and brush them. You'll hold them, won't you?"

"Certainly. You brought the stiff brush in the cab, didn't you, Maud?"

Frank straightened up in his chair. "Maud" wasn't such a common name but that he remembered where he had heard it last.

"I believe I did; suppose you look. There ought to be the brush, and my long curl, and the 'Carnation Bloom' in there."

"Yes; here it is. Here's the curl; it's awfully mused Maud; you'll have to brush it over—and the barbe, and the—no! you've forgotten the pink rouge, Maud!"

"I have! oh, pshaw! what on earth'll I look like without any color! Mrs. Merwyn told me Frank so admired a flush on a girl's cheeks."

Jennie replied pacifically, while poor Frank sat like a galvanized man.

"It won't make a bit of difference, Maud—it wouldn't take in a photograph, you know."

"Won't it?" in a tone of relief, then, half laughingly, "I hate to have that young fellow see me when I go out as pale as a ghost. He's real good-looking, isn't he?"

A vigorous brushing of locks succeeded, and Frank made a horrible grimace, all by himself.

Suddenly Jennie spoke, so suddenly that Frank half started from his chair.

"Oh, Maud Gresham, you've never brought the liquid dye for your eyebrows! What on earth will you do? Your eyebrows are so light to-day. You haven't had any on since the night of May Setton's party, have you?"

"Good heavens!"

It was all Frank Halsey said to himself, but it meant volumes.

"Oh, well, I'll put a little ink on. Say, young man," and she raised her voice, "have you a stick of India ink?"

Frank remembered some mixed in a saucer, and accordingly took it to the door of the dressing-room where a sight met his eyes that almost petrified him.

Where on earth had the girl's face and head gone to, anyhow! Then he caught a glance of a pile of "rippling" hair on the table, and a long, glistening curl hanging across a chair-back, while Miss Maud Gresham's head looked like a yellow cocoon with a pig's tail pinned to the crown.

Frank retired from the door in a panic.

"Merciful heavens! and Lou wants me to marry her!"

As he retreated, he heard Jennie's voice, and Fenn's step on the stairs.

"Now, Maud, lay on the velvet cream before you blacken your eyebrows. I've braided the switch all right. Where's the hair-pins?"

"Well, F—"

Fenn began cheerily, as he dashed in, but Frank raised a forbidding hand and pointed to the dressing-room with a countenance expressive of most doleful bewilderment.

"Hush-h, Fenn! Don't call my name, and I'll tell you by-'n'-by. Only, I would like to know whether or not all women come to pieces so readily!"

Then, in a choking undertone, Frank related his experience, while Fenn nearly strangled to keep from laughing.

Then, after a preliminary rustle, Miss Maud Gresham came out to be photographed, while, through a crack in the door, Frank watched the wonderful transformation: scene, that mass of gracefully-arranged hair, rippling low over a smooth, white forehead, those delicately-penciled eyebrows, meeting in a perfect arch, then a smooth, baby-fair complexion, made; he looked, remembered the sight in the dressing-room, and took his leave, a wiser, if not a sadder man.

"There, look at that, Frank Halsey! Now, where are your sneers and criticisms?"

Frank took Maud Gresham's photograph from Mrs. Merwyn's hand, while that lady watched his countenance most scrutinizingly.

"Oh, I see—Miss Gresham! Yes, Lou, she is here, every bit of her—except her rosy cheeks."

Lou frowned.

"Every bit of her, why, what on earth do you mean! Of course, red cheeks don't take in a photograph."

Frank elevated his eyebrows, as he handed the picture back.

"So I've heard before," he said, dryly. "That's a pretty picture, Lou."

She brightened at once.

"Of course it is. But, if you want to see the 'milk and roses' come down to the parlor. Miss Gresham is here herself!"

Frank could not help laughing at the tone of Lou's voice.

"Is she? All right. I'll go down, although I am quite sure she'll not take a fancy to me."

A moment later, and—"my brother, Mr. Frank Halsey," was bowing before "a very dear young friend of mine, Miss Maud Gresham;" and, at the same instant, a startled, mortified look came into the young lady's eyes, and a queer, husky sound into her voice.

"Why—it's—"

"Yes," said Frank, coolly, "it is the 'young man' from Mr. Fenn's gallery. You wouldn't care for any more India ink, Miss Gresham, would you?"

Miss Merwyn looked wonderingly from one to the other.

"Why, you seem to know Maud quite well, Frank! To be sure, her photograph is very much like her—"

Frank sat down carelessly in a big chair across the room from his guest.

"Yes, very much like Miss Gresham as I saw her when she came out of Harry Fenn's toilet-room. How is your obliging friend, Miss Jennie?"

It was some time before Mrs. Merwyn discovered the secret, but from the moment Maud Gresham saw Frank Halsey she knew her chance was gone, in that direction.

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the bull and the bluff, I could trace a water-course, now nearly dry; before the rain it had been quite so. The bank of this would course me, while approaching the buffalo. So I decided, and leading Pe back a ways, I lowered his bridle and bade him "watch." I knew that he would not stir a step until he heard my voice. He had accompanied me in too many hunting excursions to forget my teaching.

A sharp run soon carried me to the water-course, at a point hidden from the buffalo by the bluff, and entering it, I hastened along, stooping low beneath the bank as I neared my game. I did not fear its taking alarm from me, as the ground was moist and my footfalls were scarcely audible to my own ears. And the buffalo—as is almost invariably the case, unless during the annual migration of a herd—was feeding up the wind—that is, away from me, since the faint breeze fanned my face. So there was no danger of the scent betraying me.

Well, by cautious creeping, I gained a point just abreast the buffalo bull—one of the largest, most magnificent specimens I have ever seen—and prepared for work. I knew that if my first shot should fail, I would be in no little danger, and for a moment I fairly hesitated, debating whether I had not better accidentally alarm the game, and thus make sure of coming off with whole bones. But another peep at the glorious game decided me to run the risk.

I rested my rifle upon a little knob, and in such a position that my trembling could not affect the aim greatly. I drew a bead upon that bull for full five minutes, before I could bring myself to pull trigger. But then, as he moved his right leg forward, I sighted the little patch where the hair was worn short, just behind his leg, and fired.

The next I remember, I was peering over the bank of the water-course, a hundred yards distant from my rifle. And what a proud lad I was when I saw the buffalo lying upon its belly, its forelegs doubled beneath it, thrown in its tracks! I gave a yell of triumph that, as I afterward learned, was heard at camp, and I danced a "break-down" to celebrate my first buffalo.

A shrill whicker answered my shout, and Pe came dashing over the hill, but when he sighted the bull, he paused with a suspicious snort, then turned and galloped back over the swell. I was angry enough then, but that trick probably saved my life, afterward.

Notwithstanding my excitement, I recovered my rifle and carefully reloaded it before emerging from the water-course. That was a lesson taught me by old Pete Shafer, and one that I never forgot.

"Twas a proud lad that walked around the dead buffalo, inspecting it from every point, admiring its huge proportions, the massive head almost hidden by the long, shaggy hair; but those who have experienced a similar moment can appreciate all this much better than I can tell."

My self-gratulations were cut abruptly short by the faint thud of distant hoofbeats, and turning quickly toward the point from whence the sound came, I saw several horsemen appear at some distance along the bluff. It did not need more than one glance to tell me who and what the horsemen were. The long lances, the loose drapery, the fantastic head-dresses, could belong only to Indians.

On the impulse of the moment I seized my rifle and ran back to the water-course, hoping thus to escape their notice. Strangely enough, I never once thought of them as other than "bad Indians," though, as a general thing, the red-men were friendly at that time; that is, where the force confronting them was too strong to be handled easily.

My hopes of escaping observation were soon banished. As they galloped along the bluff I could see the Indians unslinging their bows; I could not see any firearms in their possession. A few moments showed me that I could not hope to cover myself in the water-course. From the bluff's edge the Indians could rain their arrows down upon me, their elevated position commanding the shallow ditch.

I leaped from the ditch and ran back to where lay the dead buffalo. For a moment I entertained the mad idea of trying a dead run for camp, but as the red-skins recklessly slid their ponies down the rain-guttered side of the cliff, I saw that they would speedily overhaul me. In that moment they flashed across my mind the advice Pete Shafer had often given me—to show the enemy a bold front and hold your fire as long as possible.

This thought seemed to steady my nerves, and though at first I had been terribly alarmed, from that moment I was cool enough. I yelled at the red-skins, and made the prairie signal for them to halt, by holding up my right hand with open palm toward them, moving it steadily back and forth. They did pause, but not for long; then, dividing, two and three, the five dashed rapidly around until they got between me and camp.

I knew then that they meant mischief, and knelt down beside the buffalo, thrusting my wiping-skin into the ground and holding my rifle against it, formed a steady rest. I reloaded then, what Stewart had told me, but feared to discharge my revolver lest it should provoke the Indians to an assault.

The red-skins now made a move, and I gripped my rifle firmer, believing that the end was near, yet feeling a strange joy as I resolved not to burn powder in vain, but to drop at least one enemy before going under.

But the Indians did not make the bold dash I anticipated. They galloped swiftly to and fro, gradually nearing me, shooting their arrows in my direction, though at such long range that they fell twenty yards short. Doubtless they counted upon confusing me by this mock attack, and drawing my first fire at long range, when they could easily dash in and finish the job with their arrows before I could reload. Luckily I did not fall into the trap, or I'd not be reeling off this yarn now.

Yet I began to tremble once, as I saw the distance gradually lessen between us, and the arrows to fall around me with force enough to stick up in the hard ground. By pressing the butt against my shoulder firmly, I freed my right hand and drew a revolver. I fired four chambers in succession toward the Indians, not trying to take aim, and then again clutched my rifle.

They seemed to suspect my purpose, and, after a hurried consultation, one of their number dashed toward me, as he came within range sinking behind his animal's body; and then, creeping past me at twenty yards distance, he discharged an arrow that, striking my rifle-stock, glanced aside, cutting a "gash" in my arm.

I had not time to look at my hurt before a second brave spurred out to follow his comrade. I was growing confused and excited; just what they were working for—and I could scarcely refrain from firing as he swept by, though not even a heel was visible on the pony's back; the long mane hiding his face as he fired the arrow. It hurtled so close to my cheek that I felt the wind of its passage.

At the third dash I leaped up with a wild

yell, and the pony, startled, bounded quickly to one side, just as its rider loosed his arrow. The Indian lost his balance and fell heavily to the ground. Before he could rise I sent a bullet through his ribs that ended forever his scalp-lifting.

Then, despairingly, I clutched my revolver, as the other red-skins spurred forward with wild yells. At the same moment a welcome cry came from the small crest, and I saw my friends charging down upon the enemy. The savages saw them, too, and to keep from being hemmed in against the bluff they turned aside and fled for dear life.

They were not pursued, though, for I sunk to the ground almost fainting. The reaction was too great; and, believing me either hurt or killed, the boys paused beside me, and Pet, ridden by Bob Stewart, whickered joyfully in my ear. That, more than anything else, revived me.

Pet had made at once for camp, and the boys suspected something wrong. My shots guided them, and they arrived just in time. That day I lifted my first "hair." 'Twas of a Pawnee Plot, so called from their custom of tattooing their faces.

THE BATTLE.

BY FRANK DAVES.

Bright as young ambition's dream,
Morning has begun to beam
On the hills beyond the stream.

All the plain is spotted white,
And the troops with muskets bright
March along in proud array;
Faith, it is a glorious sight,
Issuing from the breast of night
In the break of day.

Now the bugle blows its blast,
And the soldiers hurry fast
And the valley soon is past,
And the ridge is gained at last.

Soon afar, in grim array,
Come the Southrons stern and gray—
Valiant men of war are they;
While the Northrons, brave and true,
Come bedecked in Union blue.

Now "Advance" is rung along;
And the lines go moving on;
And the bugle blows its song,
While the Northrons, brave and true,
Come bedecked in Union blue.

Now "Advance" is rung along;
And the lines go moving on;
And the bugle blows its song,
While the Northrons, brave and true,
Come bedecked in Union blue.

Now the curling smoke ascends,
And its dusky wreath it sends
O'er the battle torn and red;
Now within the smoky cave,
Hear the wild yells of the dead;
See the wounded and the dead.

Now the lines are closely meeting,
Now advancing, now retreating;
Now the one begins to fall;
Now the other comes to all;
Backward, forward, ever-changing,
O'er the field the tide is ranging.

Hark, oh, hark, the awful screams,
See, oh, see, the tides of blood,
Dying all to a purer strife;
With their doubly horrid flood.

Hark, oh, hark, the horrid sound—
That for hours has thundered round—
Now in blood and woe is drowned,
See, the battle-day is o'er.

Months have passed, no more the battle
Rings along the ridges red;
And the peaceful, quietude
Nip the grass among the dead.

Slowly in the middle air
Swing the valiant dead and round;
And the trees all gray and bare,
Though the spring is on the ground.

Not a cloud is in the sky,
Yet the sun is dull and red;
Silence, like a mystery,
Is upon the field of dead.

Call this glory, ye who may
Talk and sing of war and strife;
Say that war's most horrid day
Is the grandest in your life!

Come, ye men of valiant deeds,
Come, ye men of battles red,
When your stricken comrades dead,
Come and see this field of dead.

They are but bones, yet low they say
That their covering once has bled;
Come ye men of war's array,
Come and see this field of dead.

On Kissing.

WHEN kissing began is not a matter of record, but it doubtless had its origin in the garden of Eden. If our good mother Eve did not taste its sweets in her state of innocence, she must have learned the art when she first looked into the face of little Cain! Certain it is that ever since the travel-worn Jacob kissed his beautiful and blushing cousin Rachel, at the well of Haran, this form of salutation has been sanctioned by "good society." Down to the days of the apostles, it seems to have been as common among men as women. The most notable of all deceptions, by means of the kiss, was that practised by Judas; and probably this base betrayal tended to bring the custom into disrepute among men. At all events, for generations past, in England and America, kissing has been common among women, as hand-shaking has been universal among men.

On the continent of Europe, kissing still prevails among men who are intimate friends, and must be held altogether proper among the gentler sex. Why should it be denounced as vulgar and immoral in our day? Is it because some pretty lips, at times thus employed, give utterance to evil words at other times concerning the person saluted? On the same principle, hand-shaking must be condemned among men, many of whom, while cordially grasping one another by the hand, may have an itching palm, each for the other's pocket-book! What does the custom imply? Is it a sign of greeting, by which love, respect or submission are indicated. In some countries, it accompanies self-abasement, as between superiors and inferiors, where the kissing of the hand, the beard, and even of the foot are practiced. But in our own country, it is merely an expression of affection, between women who are friends, and who casually meet in a public place.

Ladies of refined feeling must show some sign of welcome when they meet, and why should not the time-honored custom of kissing be preserved? What will those ladies who "move in the upper circle" substitute for the kiss? Perhaps they will adopt the custom of the Society Islands, where friends on meeting rub the ends of their noses together! The nose cannot be accused of speaking evil, although it is said to be "turned up" contemptuously at times, even in "good society." Perhaps the wink will become the mode of salutation among the ineffably polite, who have resolved to throw no more kisses away upon the streets, but reserve them for other places and occasions.